

# I've Never Been a Mother Before

Category: Making Assumptions

written by Andrea Eisenberg | August 4, 2019

At thirty-six, I had my first child. Up until then, my focus was on my career to become an ob/gyn physician.

During my pregnancy, I chose a doctor and hospital that were not affiliated with my hospital. I wanted to be a patient, not a doctor who happened to be pregnant. I ended up having a scheduled C-section; my child was breech, and no amount of encouragement would change that.

As soon as my OB walked into the operating room, he loudly announced, "She is an OB too!" And, in an instant, the cat was out of the bag. No longer could I be anonymous.

Once my baby was placed in my arms and I was being rolled into my postpartum room, it really struck me I had no idea how to be a mother.

The first night, my husband and I were up most of the night with our new, crying baby. By morning, he decided it was too much for him. "I can't do this," he announced and walked out on us. I had no idea when or if he would return.

Now on my own, I felt like a blubbering mess. I didn't know how to change a diaper. I didn't know how to nurse. I didn't know how to manage the pain of my incision. I was embarrassed to ask, like I should know these things already! And it seemed the nursing staff made the same assumption.

My family was two thousand miles away. Who was going to teach me to be a mother?

Just before discharge, as my nurse was going through my papers, I asked when someone was going to go over baby care topics with me. "Oh," she answered. "We thought you knew about the parenting channel on the TV here and ..."

"I may be a doctor, but I've never been a mother before," I responded, as tears rolled down my face.

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