

## Woman and Baby Die During Childbirth

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Mrs. Doe was a 37-year-old wife and mother, and was preparing to give birth to her third child at a local hospital. It was a beautiful spring-time Saturday afternoon when Mrs. Doe began experiencing contractions. She was admitted to the local hospital and her labor progressed nicely throughout Saturday and into Sunday afternoon.

After being on pitocin for some time, which is a drug administered to augment labor, there was some fluctuation and decrease in Mrs. Doe's baby's heart rate. Out of concern for the well being of the baby, a decision was made to perform a cesarean section on Mrs. Doe.

Mrs. Doe had already been prepped earlier in the day for the potential need for a cesarean section. A line had been inserted for epidural anesthesia. As can sometimes happen when the needle is inserted in the spine for the anesthesia, the needle penetrated into Mrs. Doe's spinal canal rather than stopping in the area outside the canal.

Mrs. Doe received a full dosage of the epidural medication to anesthetize her from the chest down, thereby permitting the surgery to begin. Unfortunately, the anesthesia administered made its way into Mrs. Doe's spinal canal through the hole created when the preparatory tap had been done. This caused Mrs. Doe to experience paralysis of her lungs, preventing her from breathing on her own. Normally, this is a circumstance that, while serious, is easily treated. By intubating her, Mrs. Doe should have been able to

receive proper oxygenation until the epidural anesthetic wore off. Tragically, the life saving effort failed. Mrs. Doe's brain was deprived of oxygen for an extended period of time, and she and her baby died within two days.

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Mrs. Doe is survived by her husband and two children. Attorneys Chris Searcy and Chris Speed handled the case. They were able to satisfactorily resolve this case in the weeks before trial for a confidential sum in excess of \$1 million. The Doe family intends to use the majority of the money to further the education of the children. It will also be used to replace the income Mrs. Doe had been earning in her full-time occupation. ■