

## Jessica's story

I had a horrible birth experience in May 2003 and although I hoped to have a few years to get over it, I found myself pregnant again exactly a year later!

Basically, my birthplan had been **EPIDURAL (!)** in big red letters and there was no reason why I couldn't have had one for this birth. I wanted a pain-free birth with no mind-altering drugs but when I asked, my midwife kept delaying, fobbing me off - it was like she wanted an essay on why I deserved an epidural!

Finally, at the pushing stage I just gave in but then foetal distress kicked in and I ended up with an Emergency caesarean section anyway. This was the best result in the world for me but a month later, once I was settled with the baby, I felt that I'd been abused and betrayed by the midwife, the one person I was relying on to help me through this. *'It's the best way'* she had said at the time but labour is a completely subjective thing and a comment like that shows that she had her own agenda. I couldn't stop crying about, reliving it and fantasising murder until I talked to my health visitor but it still gets me if I let it.

I had another low about it when I found I was pregnant again until the morning sickness wore off, crying everyday because I want a c-section this time and was (am still) terrified I won't get one. I've managed to convince myself that I WILL get my c/section now, although I don't see the consultant for another 3 weeks, and that is getting me through. I am quite prepared to hold a knife to anyone's throat until I'm promised I can get this baby out the way **I want!**

I know that my mind couldn't survive another trial of labour and I cannot risk a breakdown or even psychotic episode when I'll have 2 babies to look after.

Why is this not a more recognised thing? I diagnosed it myself as PTSD but I don't know where to go from there. For me, I guess the only way to cure it completely is to have another baby exactly how you want it?

Fingers crossed this will all be over for me by February!