

Hypoglycemia: Testing Delayed, Nurses Blamed.

An emergency c-section was ordered by the mother's obstetrician due to the possibility the fetus was in distress during labor. The mother had noticed a decrease in fetal movement for three days. When she got to the hospital the monitor picked up a fluctuating fetal heart rate and showed non-reassuring tracings.

Right after delivery the baby was lethargic, showed poor tone and color and did not cry.

The nurses did not test the baby's blood sugar until two hours after birth. They got a reading of nearly zero, tested again several times, then sent a blood sample off to the lab for confirmation.

When the lab finally confirmed the result the nurses tried feeding the baby formula. When they eventually notified the physician IV glucose was started, but not before the blood glucose level had been basically zero for at least two hours.

The history and signs of possible hypoglycemia required immediate testing at birth and prompt action when an unacceptably low result was first obtained, the lawsuit filed on the child's behalf claimed.

A settlement of \$3,500,000 was paid for the child's case filed in the US District Court, Middle District of Georgia, as compensation for cerebral palsy, spastic quadriplegia, microcephaly and psychomotor retardation. **Coleman v. US, 2009 WL 6764097 (M.D. Ga., January 28, 2009).**