

## Labor & Delivery: Faulty Nursing Assessment Before Induction Of Labor.

The labor and delivery nurses' vaginal exam when the mother was admitted seemed to reveal the baby was in a head-first presentation.

Her ob/gyn physician, who had done all of her prenatal exams, ordered Cytotec at 7:00 p.m. and again at 11:00 p.m. to move the labor along, without actually coming in to see the patient.

At 2:10 a.m. the nurse saw meconium on the bed sheet. The nurse did a vaginal exam and could not verify the baby's presentation. The nurse paged the ob/gyn. The ob/gyn came in, examined the patient and determined it was a breech presentation. The heart tones were non-reassuring. He started an emergency c-section at 3:00 a.m. The baby died several weeks later.

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***The nurses started medication to induce labor without an accurate assessment that the baby was in a cephalic presentation and before the fetal monitor was started and reassuring data was obtained.***

COURT OF APPEALS OF TEXAS  
February 15, 2011

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The Court of Appeals of Texas saw grounds for the parents' lawsuit.

Before a labor-inducing drug is started it must be determined the baby is in a head-down presentation, by means of a vaginal exam or an ultrasound, and assessment of the presentation should continue until the baby is delivered. Reassuring monitor data should be obtained before starting the medication, the parents' experts also said.

The nurses' assessment was faulty and the ob/gyn was negligent to rely on the nurses' assessment without verifying it himself, the Court believed. **Herrera v. Holiday**, 2011 WL 531694 (Tex. App., February 15, 2011).