



## ESL Podcast 207 – Giving Birth in a Hospital

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### GLOSSARY

**pregnant** – a woman (or female animal), when she will be having a baby

\* After having her second child, Lin decided to wait at least two years before she got pregnant again.

**to have (one's) water break** – to have the “membrane,” or thin skin where the baby is located inside of a woman’s stomach break and for the fluid inside to come out

\* Now that I’m in my eighth month of pregnancy, I’m starting to worry that my water will break while I’m at work.

**contraction** – a painful feeling when a woman’s muscles tighten, usually before a baby is born, that becomes more frequent the closer it is to the birth of the baby

\* The contractions started while she was eating dinner and her husband took her to the hospital.

**in labor** – in the act of giving birth to a baby

\* After being in labor for seven hours, she told her family that she will never have another baby!

**to page** – to send an electronic message to a pager

\* We tried paging Dora for this important phone call, but she must not be carrying her pager right now.

**maternity ward** – a part of the hospital where babies are born

\* Do you want to go with me to the maternity ward when it’s time for the baby to be born?

**reception desk** – an area where guests stop first in a public place or place of business

\* Since Elias wasn’t in his office in the morning, I left a message for him at the reception desk.

**to admit** – at a hospital, to be received as a patient, usually to stay overnight

\* The doctor told me that he wanted to admit me into the hospital so that they could run some tests.



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**insurance card** – a card provided by the insurance company showing that you have coverage, or that the company will help pay

\* When I arrived at my dentist's office, I realized that I had forgotten my dental insurance card at home.

**birthing suite** – a room where a woman gives birth to a baby, usually in a hospital

\* The birthing suite has everything the doctor needs to deliver a healthy baby.

**false labor** – a feeling when a woman's muscles tighten while she is pregnant, but that is not actually a sign that the baby will be born soon

\* After two false labors, the doctor told her to stay in bed as much as possible.

**far along** – the amount of time, usually in months or weeks, a woman has been pregnant already

\* When she told us that she was pregnant, we asked her how far along she was.

**head first/breech** – when a baby is born, the part of the baby that appears first: the head (head first) or feet (breech)

\* My son was born breech but my daughter came out head first.

**to be relieved** – to stop being in pain or difficulty; to stop worrying

\* We were all so relieved when the police rescued her son from the top of the building.

**janitor** – a person who takes care of and cleans a building

\* The janitors in this building usually start work after 6 p.m., when nearly all of the employees have gone home.



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### COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Why did the husband and wife in the story go to the hospital?
    - a) The wife was feeling ill.
    - b) The wife was having contractions.
    - c) The doctor paged the husband.
  
  2. When the doctor arrived, she told them that:
    - a) The baby would be born soon.
    - b) This was a false labor.
    - c) The baby will be born breech.
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### WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

#### **in labor**

The phrase “in labor,” in this podcast, means to be in the process of having a baby: “Does your husband plan to be in the room when you are in labor?” The word “labor” is most often used to mean work, usually difficult or physical work. It can either be used as a noun, “labor,” or as a verb, “to labor”: “After laboring on her taxes for three hours, she decided to hire a professional to do them instead.” In the U.S., there is a national holiday called “Labor Day” that is celebrated on the first Monday in September each year. This is a day to celebrate workers and the work that they do. In the federal government, one of the major departments is the “Labor Department” that is concerned with the country’s workers and the person who is in charge of that department is the “Secretary of Labor.”

#### **to admit**

In this podcast, the verb “to admit” means to be formally received into a hospital: “He was admitted into the hospital with a broken leg and a head wound.” The verb, “to admit,” is more commonly used when someone finally says that something is the truth, usually when they don’t want to: “The girl admitted that she had stolen the flowers from their garden.” Or, “I have to admit that I’m too tired to go dancing tonight.” A phrase, “to admit failure,” is used when you reluctantly say that you have failed: “I think it’s time to admit failure and to close this restaurant since we don’t have enough customers.” Or, “Since no one wanted to admit failure, they told everyone that they had just changed their minds.”



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### CULTURE NOTE

Most babies are born in “vaginal births,” or come out of the woman without surgery. In recent years in the U.S., however, there have been more and more “cesarean sections” (sometimes called “C-sections”), or births where surgery is done to take the baby out of the woman. Today, the number of caesarean births has reached an all-time high: Almost 30 percent of all births are caesarean. This is a 40 percent increase since 1996.

According to some reports, one reason for this has to do with the age of the women when they give birth. Since women in the U.S. are waiting longer to have children—some in their 30’s or 40’s—they are having more “complications,” or problems when they give birth that require cesarean sections for the baby to be born.

Most doctors still believe that cesarean sections should only be done when there are good medical reasons to do it, such as a risk to the mother’s or the baby’s health. In the past few years in the U.S., however, there have been more and more “elective” cesarean sections, or cesareans done by the patient’s choice. Some doctors believe that there are risks to each type of “deliver,” or method for having a baby, and the woman should choose which method is right for her. Other doctors, however, are very worried about this trend because, they say, cesarean sections are serious surgeries that may mean more problems for the mother and the baby than a vaginal birth.

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Comprehension Questions Correct Answers: 1 – b; 2 – a



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### COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 207, “Giving Birth in a Hospital.”

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 207. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

Be sure to visit our website at [eslpod.com](http://eslpod.com). There you can find a complete Learning Guide for this podcast. This is an eight to ten page guide that gives you all of the words and definitions that we will discuss today. It will also give you some additional new definitions and words that we don't talk about on the podcast, as well as a cultural note related to today's topic.

Today's topic is having a baby in a hospital. Let's get started.

[Start of story]

It was 2 o'clock in the morning when my wife woke me up. She is eight-and-a-half months pregnant and she told me that her water had broken. She said that she was having contractions and she was sure that she was in labor. I paged our doctor and drove to the hospital.

When we arrived, we went straight to the maternity ward. I went to the reception desk, and told the clerk that my wife was in labor and needed to be admitted right away. The nurse asked me for my insurance card and gave me three forms to fill out. She said that someone would take my wife into the birthing suite soon.

The doctor arrived and she examined my wife. She told us that this wasn't false labor and that my wife was pretty far along. After a lot of pushing, the baby came out head first, not breech, and it was healthy.

I was so relieved, I couldn't stop hugging my wife. Then, I hugged the doctor, and the nurse, and the janitor!

[End of story]



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This podcast is called, “Giving Birth in a Hospital.” To give birth, “birth,” is when a woman has a baby. When the baby comes out of the woman that is to give birth.

Well, the story here is that it was “2 o'clock in the morning” - 2 a.m. - “my wife woke me up.” I was sleeping. “She is eight-and-a-half months pregnant.” To say someone is pregnant, “pregnant,” means that they are expecting a baby, that a baby is going to be born, usually after nine months. We use the expression to describe how long a woman has been pregnant. So you may say, “She's five months pregnant,” means she's been pregnant for five months.

My wife “told me that her water had broken.” What happens when a baby is born - and I'm not a medical doctor, but I did watch a television show once - what happens is that there is a thin, almost like a skin around the baby before it is born, and in order for the baby to be born that skin has to break. And, when it breaks, certain liquid - certain fluid, we call it water here - has to come out. So, when a woman's having a baby and she says that her water broke or her water had broken, that means that the baby is close to being born.

My wife “said that she was having contractions.” A contraction, “contraction,” is when the muscles tighten, when they become tight, before a baby is going to be born. These are the woman's muscles that are in the lower part of her body. They start to tighten; it can be somewhat painful I hear, and that is a contraction. Well, when a woman starts having these contractions, these muscles tightenings, then she is often close to giving birth. When a woman is in...having contractions, when she is ready to give birth, we say that she's in labor, “labor.” To be in labor means that you are going to be giving birth very soon. Usually it happens you start to go in labor maybe two, three, four, sometimes 10 or 15 hours before the baby is born, so you're having those contractions. That is when a woman is going to give birth to the baby.

Well, “I paged our doctor and” we “drove to the hospital.” To page, “page,” means to send, usually, a telephone number or a text message to someone. Pagers are the little electronic devices that receive a page. They used to be very popular. Pagers are not as popular in the United States since everyone now has a cell phone, or a cellular mobile phone, but some doctors still have pagers so that you can send them a message electronically.



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“When we arrived” at the hospital, my wife and I “went straight to the maternity ward.” To go straight to means to go directly to. We didn't stop anywhere else. We went straight to the maternity ward. Maternity, “maternity,” refers to those who are mothers. The word mater in Latin means mother, and maternity is related to a mother, a woman who has or is going to have a baby. A ward, “ward,” is a section of the hospital. We usually just use that word in talking about hospitals. So, you can have the maternity ward, that's where women who are having babies; you can also different wards with different names for different medical procedures.

“I went to the reception desk.” When you go into a hospital, the desk where the person takes your information is called the reception desk. That's where they receive you. And, I “told the clerk that my wife was in labor,” she was going to give birth, “and she needed to be admitted” to the hospital immediately. To be admitted means that she was going to stay at the hospital. So, you fill out some forms - you have to give them some information - and that will allow that person to stay usually overnight at the hospital, meaning you're going to spend at least 24 hours there. If you go into the hospital and you are not very sick or your condition is not serious, you will probably not be admitted. You are only admitted to the hospital, meaning you are going to stay overnight, if you have something serious wrong with you.

“The nurse asked me for my insurance card.” Insurance, “insurance,” is when you pay money to a company and the company will pay your medical bills when you need them to be paid. The nurse asked for my insurance card, which is proof that I have insurance; it's a card that the insurance company gives me. She also “gave me three forms to fill out” - three pieces of paper to put information on. “She said that someone would take my wife into the birthing suite soon.” A birthing, “birthing,” suite, “suite,” is a room where women who are in labor give birth to their babies. So, it's a special room where the woman is actually going to give birth.

“The doctor arrived,” “she examined my wife” and she told us that my wife was not in “false labor.” False, “false,” labor is when you are having those muscle contractions, but you are not ready to give birth yet. You're not actually ready to have the baby born. Well, this was not false labor, it was truly in labor and “my wife was pretty far along.” To be far along means to close to the point, in this case close to the point of giving birth, close to the time of giving birth.



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“After a lot of pushing,” by my wife, not me, “the baby came out head first, not breech.” When we say the baby came out head first, we mean that the first thing that came out of the woman was the baby's head. If the baby's feet come out first, we call that breech, “breech.” So, if the baby comes out breech that means that the feet came out before the head.

Well, the baby “was healthy,” and “I was so relieved I couldn't stop hugging my wife.” To be relieved, “relieved,” means that you are no longer in pain. You stop being in pain or you stop worrying about something. Someone gives you good news about something, you say, “Oh, I'm so relieved,” because you were worried about it. “I hugged the doctor,” and I hugged the nurse and I also hugged the janitor because I was so happy. The janitor, “janitor,” is the person that cleans the hospital, that cleans the floor and so forth.

This podcast was about giving birth in a hospital, where the woman pushes and the baby comes out. There are other ways that a baby can be born, and in our culture note for this podcast we talk about something called a “C-section,” and that is another way a baby is born. You can read about that in the Learning Guide.

Now let's listen to the story, this time at a native rate of speech.

[Start of story]

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[End of story]

Today's script was written by Dr. Lucy Tse. That's all we have time for on today's podcast. Remember, if you have a comment or question, you can email us at [eslpod@eslpod.com](mailto:eslpod@eslpod.com).

From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Thanks for listening. We'll see you next time on ESL Podcast.

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