

Our fertility story did not end with our failed IVF. In December we decided to get a second opinion. We found a new doctor who is incredible. He immediately found several things the other doctor had missed, namely- the fact that the septum could and should be removed. I had my 3rd fertility related surgery in March of 2012 and this time it was successful. Our doctor was optimistic about our chances of conceiving on our own- though recommended an IUI due to my ever-increasing age. We tried one month on our own, then did two more unsuccessful IUI's. In July of this year, we decided to try another IVF. During this time, we also learned that my husband's sister, who had been trying for 10 months, was finally pregnant. While we were happy for her, we were sad for ourselves but hopeful the IVF would work this time and we could be pregnant together. The meds were delivered and we were gearing up for another cycle and just waiting for my period to start in August. My period never came. I was a few days late and anxious to get started on the IVF cycle, so I went in for a pregnancy test to rule that out. Your mind/body can play tricks on you during this trying time and I just wanted to be sure. To our surprise and shock, the test was positive! WE HAD FINALLY DONE IT! WE GOT PREGNANT ON OUR OWN!!!! WE WERE ONE OF THOSE COUPLES THAT YOU READ ABOUT- WHO GOT PREGNANT ON THE CUSP OF DOING AN IVF CYCLE! We were excited- but also cautiously optimistic- we'd been here before and were no longer naive. I had multiple blood tests to make sure my numbers were appropriately rising and they were doubling like a charm! All was going well and we scheduled that first ultrasound to hear the heartbeat. This was last Wednesday. The ultrasound tech was unable to see the heartbeat but said it was probably a little too early. Then we met with the nurse and were immediately sucker-punched. She informed us that the fetus is measuring small, and also asked if the tech mentioned that we may have a cornual pregnancy. We had no idea what she was talking about. She explained that this is a rare and specific type of ectopic pregnancy, where the embryo implants outside of the uterus between the tubes and the horn of the uterus. It is extremely dangerous for the mother as it can rupture and cause hemorrhaging. The pregnancy is not viable and must either be taken care of surgically, or with a drug that essentially poisons the fetus. We were devastated. We met with the doctor and he informed us that he would know more once we did bloodwork. The silver lining was he did not think the pregnancy was cornual, but he also did not think it was viable as it was measuring too far behind (it looked about 4 weeks and I should have been about 6.5 weeks) He expected my HCG numbers to be dropping which meant the pregnancy would terminate on its own, but if they weren't dropping, he would send me to a perinatologist who would confirm the cornual pregnancy and devise a plan. We were scared and sad and angry and defeated. Why does this keep happening to us? Is this a sick joke the universe is playing on us? Maybe we are not meant to have our own children. We learned later that day that my numbers had risen so schedules an appointment with the perinatologist first thing in the morning. We spent the evening crying and mourning and even destroying an old Styrofoam cooler and a pregnancy journal I never got the chance to use in a fit of rage. It was collectively one of the worst nights of our lives.

The next day we went to the perinatologist, expecting the worst but hoping that the diagnosis was wrong and I would be safe. The doctor came in and said "I'm going to show you that the embryo is in the uterus because I know they scared the hell out of you yesterday". We were relieved to learn this, but still upset about the loss. "It's too early to tell" the doctor assured us. He told us a story about falling HCG numbers and impending miscarriage that resulted in his son. "Just wait" he said. "Come back next week". We left in a daze. This was not the news we were expecting. We had already mourned the loss of our baby and now he was telling us it was still possible that the baby could make it? I went home and googled all I could about the situation. There is an entire website called misdiagnosed miscarriage, with story after story similar to mine that resulted in healthy pregnancies. I was encouraged and hopeful, but confused and worried. It was the longest week of our lives. Two days ago, we went in for our follow up visit. At first, we saw a flicker on the screen and were overjoyed. The tech informed us it was just my blood flow. She did find a fetal pole but still no heartbeat. The doctor came in and sounded encouraged because there had been growth. However, when he did the ultrasound himself, he said he was concerned with what he was seeing. He told us that unfortunately, he did not believe this would be a healthy pregnancy. He wanted a repeat HCG done to see if the numbers were dropping, and wants us to come back on Monday. If there is no heartbeat by then, we know it is over. He was not optimistic. This time we were not surprised, but still of course, saddened. We were also concerned, because we have a trip to Seattle next week on Tuesday. We explained this to the doctor and he told us we could probably get a D&C on Monday.

We left once again in a daze, trying to figure out if we needed to postpone our trip. We were frustrated with once again being in limbo, but not hopeful this time. I began spotting that evening and was actually relieved. I was so tired of not knowing, that the spotting was at least an indication that we had an answer. Not the answer we hope for, but an answer nonetheless. Now the question became do I wait to miscarry on my own, or get a D&C? I went to Dr. Google again and learned a natural miscarriage can take weeks and is extremely painful. It didn't seem like something I wanted to go through in Seattle. However, we didn't know if doing a D&C on Monday would allow enough time to recover for our Tuesday flight. I spent all day yesterday talking to doctors and exploring options. Today I will see my regular OB at 10:45. He will do an u/s and assuming the baby still hasn't grown, will schedule the D&C for this weekend. We have no idea what comes next.