



ACNM REDUCE Campaign Media Briefing Personal Statement of Karen Salinetti

My name is Karen Salinetti and I live in Falls Church, Virginia. I am presently a stay-at-home mom and previously worked for the federal government. This is my story.

I underwent a cesarean delivery performed for the birth of my first son in April of 2002. In August 2003, I became pregnant again, but miscarried in October 2003, at nine weeks gestation. I again became pregnant in December 2003, but again miscarried, this time in March 2004, at 13 weeks gestation.

I decided to pursue testing to explore the reasons for my miscarriages. In June 2004, I underwent a diagnostic test called a hysterosonogram (a procedure that allows doctors to examine the inside of the uterus and check for abnormalities with the use of ultrasound) which identified potential adhesions (scar tissue) in my uterine cavity.

I underwent another diagnostic test in June 2004, called a sonohysterogram (an ultrasound/sonogram in which saline is injected into the uterus; it is used to check for abnormalities.) which confirmed the existence of intra-uterine adhesions, which I was told were caused by my c-section.

I had surgery in July 2004 to remove the adhesions. Both a hysteroscopy and laparoscopy were performed during the surgery; the hysteroscopy was done to remove the adhesions inside my uterus; and the laparoscopy was done to explore the existence of any additional adhesions caused by the c-section outside of my uterus.

The Laparoscopy revealed significant pelvic adhesions. (One of my ovaries was adherent to the pelvic sidewall with adhesions, and another band of adhesions was found running from my other ovary to the pelvic sidewall to my colon. There was also a band of scar across the opening of my left fallopian tube.) These adhesions were removed during the Laparoscopy.

The doctor who performed my surgery (a well-respected fertility specialist) couldn't say with any certainty that the adhesions in my uterus were the cause of either or both of my miscarriages, but he did say that it was a definite possibility. Apparently, if my fertilized eggs implanted either on or too close to the adhesions (instead of implanting on healthy endometrium), then the placenta would not be able to obtain the nutrients needed to sustain the pregnancy.

This same doctor also told me that the other adhesions found in my pelvis could have led to pelvic pain, potential fertility problems, and/or bowel issues down the road had they not been removed.

Another comment my doctor made to me during our follow-up was that he recommended that I consider a VBAC for any future births since he was concerned about the adhesions re-forming if I had a repeat c-section.

Having to endure the surgery was also a nuisance, and while the recovery wasn't too awful, it did require me to reduce my activity level for six weeks.

In October of 2004, I became pregnant once again (my first post-surgery pregnancy.) This time, I was able to carry my baby to term and gave birth to my second child vaginally in July 2005.

I want women to know all the risks; too often, information about the surgery is glossed over, and in my case, had been better informed, I might have made different decisions.

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