

My name is Taylor Turner,

In 2015, while giving birth to my daughter at Shady Grove Hospital, in Montgomery County, I experienced what felt like an assembly line inside the medical system. I was rushed through childbirth that ended with a C-section performed against my will by a doctor who scheduled himself to deliver babies on Wednesdays, from what was told to me.

I was unknowingly induced in my doctor's office and later given Pitocin at the hospital, which intensified my contractions. Soon After, I was told there was a medical emergency and a C-section was performed.

After the surgery, I was told that because I am a black woman, I had a "Curved Pelvic Bone" and would always require a C-section. I later learned that this statement was not medically accurate. It felt like a justification for a procedure I was pressured into without proper consent.

During the procedure, I was not fully medicated. I could feel the cutting, and pulling and I cried out in pain, my pleas were ignored. I was told if I did not stop crying, I would have to be put to sleep.

Afterwards, I was taken to recovery, I was shaking and crying trying to process what had happened to me.

One of the most important moments of my life became one of the most traumatic.

My testimony is not only about what happened to me but about the lack of transparency, that every woman deserves.

While C-Sections can be lifesaving when medically necessary, they're a major surgery and should never occur without full understanding and informed consent.

What happened to me reflects a larger issue many black women face in the healthcare systems, being dismissed and not given full autonomy over our bodies during childbirth.

Throughout my pregnancy, most importantly my labor, I was dismissed and unheard.

As a biracial woman, it has been made clear that we are being subjected simply because of our race. These biases can influence how our care, pain and concerns are treated.

Women should not have to fear bringing life into the world. Childbirth is natural, every woman deserves transparency from the medical system meant to support them, and not have medical professionals intentionally bring about complications leaving everlasting traumas.

My question for you is this: When black/brown women, walk into hospitals to give birth, are we entering a system where outcomes are already decided for us? Or is the issue that too many providers lack the education and understanding necessary to deliver equitable maternal care to women of color?

How many more Wolves dressed in sheep's clothing do we have to move through before we can change their conditions, their statistics.

The data is deeply concerning. Black women are 2.5 times more likely to undergo a c-section.

These gaps cannot be ignored.

I wonder, do these gaps point to lack in care, biases, education or simply all three?

My request is that you continue investing in maternal health, specifically in accountability, and education. Healthcare providers should be required to demonstrate competency in maternal health equity, including awareness of unique risk and needs of women of color.

This should not be optional; it should be a standard of care.

Every woman deserves to be heard, respected, and treated with the highest level of care; and not have their rights or body violated.