

The Spurrell Family Part 6: Christina

Christina, a cousin of Alan who is 35 years old, visits her family doctor because she has missed her period (last one just over 5 weeks ago) and thinks she may be pregnant. She has been taking a combined oral contraceptive for seven months, since her relationship with her partner George has gotten serious and they have been sexually active, and to help her frequent heavy periods.

She has been taking her contraceptive pill regularly for the most part but may have missed one or two pills in the past month. She does recall taking Penicillin for a sore throat in the past month. She has continued to take the oral contraceptive until today. She is scared and doesn't know what she will do if she is pregnant. She is working in a retail store in the local mall and George is still in school at CONA in St James.

Pregnancy test done in the office is positive. Christina is tearful when is told this and expresses concern about how this will affect her relationship with George. They had no plans to have a baby at this point. She has not told anyone, including George or her family, that she missed her period.

Christina has never been pregnant before and has been healthy apart from having an abnormal pap at 21. She recalls her doctor at the time telling her she had some sort of lesion and a test was positive. She was seen by a specialist and followed up with regular pap tests and colposcopy, with resolution of the issues.

She has always struggled with her weight, and has tried every diet, losing and gaining weight as she goes from diet to old eating habits. She had a blood test done several years ago, showing an abnormal fasting sugar. Further testing identified an issue and her doctor said she could go on to develop Type 2 Diabetes if she did not watch her diet and lose some weight. She has not had it checked again in the past year. She has a family history of Type 2 diabetes (her mother) and hypertension (her father), as well as substance abuse and depression.

She is a nonsmoker. She notes that she took Tylenol and Advil when she had the sore throat and that, at a party about two weeks ago, she had three glasses of wine, and one shooter of vodka.

Christina is counseled regarding the pregnancy. The options of having the baby and keeping or adopting it, as well as termination of the pregnancy, are discussed. She says she will think about this and talk with George, her mother and also the elders in the community. A plan is made for her to return for further discussion of her options, within the next 1-2 weeks.

One Week Later

Christina returns one week later with her partner George. They have talked with lots of stress and tears, but have decided to keep the baby and stay together. George seems nervous, but

very supportive. He is 24 years old and wants to provide for the baby. This was his first serious relationship. They hold hands and she looks at him lovingly throughout the visit.

Christina feels well physically but looks tired and worn out from all the stress that this unexpected pregnancy has caused. Prenatal blood work is ordered and advise given to return for a pap test and full physical.

Six Days Later

Six days later, Christina phones; she is having vaginal bleeding and abdominal pain. Upon her and George's arrival at the office, she is crying, looks exhausted and George is very worried about her. The bleeding started about 2 hours ago, is now heavier than her normal period, and she passed a large clot about 20 minutes ago at home. She is having lower abdominal cramping pain that has decreased a bit since the clot. She is very scared and worries she may be having a miscarriage. She notes that she and George had sex last night and, as she found it painful, they stopped for fear it would hurt the baby.

Christina is examined using latex free gloves as she had a bad reaction to latex gloves a few years ago. She is then transferred to the hospital for ultrasound and bloodwork.

Christina and George are informed that she has had a miscarriage. She is very upset and blaming herself. She feels that is she hadn't been so stressed and hadn't had the alcohol, this wouldn't have happened. Although she had not wanted to have the baby at first, they had started to look forward to having a baby together since they decided to keep it.