

# New cesarean method could revolutionize birth

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May 13, 2016



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Allows moms to bond with babies immediately



Updated: 11:25 PM CDT May 12, 2016

## **MILWAUKEE —**

A Milwaukee doctor is part of a medical breakthrough aimed at helping connect mothers and babies immediately following cesarean section procedures.

One mother, Laura Horton of New Berlin, is backing the method. She credits her good mood to her recent birthing experience – a unique, first-ever C-section.

Typically, during the surgery, the baby is delivered, brought briefly to mom, then taken under a warmer to be checked by medical professionals. It's a process that takes between 15 to 20 minutes before the child is returned to the mother and Horton went through it during her first son's birth.

**VIDEO: Doctor, nurse work to change cesarean section procedures**

“I didn’t see him for 45 minutes,” Horton said. “It was a kind of passing. Here’s your son, take a picture, then they rushed him to the NICU (neonatal intensive care unit).”

She was determined to have a better experience afterward.

“It is a surgery, but it’s also the birth of your child, and that’s important and that needs to be the focus,” Horton said.

So Dr. Sheldon Wasserman of Columbia St. Mary’s Hospital began researching, and eventually performed a C-section on Horton with a special drape, allowing for skin-to-skin contact from mother to baby.

He said early bonding time has critical health benefits.

“The vast majority of C-sections, the babies come out screaming, crying. The first thing they’re looking for is their mother. They’re not looking for me,” he said.

The Horton’s hired a photographer to capture the moment.

“He just passed him through,” Horton said. “I was so happy.”

Wasserman was also struck by the success of the operation.

“It was just a miracle, the mother bonding in an operating room,” he said.

The method was invented by three nurses in Virginia. Columbia St. Mary’s is working to become a vendor of the drapes, which are produced by Clever Medical.

Wasserman was the first doctor in Wisconsin to use the drape.

But Kim Jarrelle was among those to first saw the want and need from moms in the operating room.

She told WISN 12 News Hillary Mintz that Clever medical is working to change the standard of care for moms and babies.

“We need more physicians like Dr. Wasserman to help support us and support all that it does for the moms and their babies,” Jarrelle said.

With a third of all babies born in the United States by C-section, some wonder why the method hasn’t come sooner.

“I think there’s a lot of people who say this is the way it is,” Wasserman said.

“Women just have to accept what’s out there and you can’t accept anything better.”

That's why he's trying to lead change, all while keeping the procedure sterile and honoring a mother's desire.

Horton is eager to see the drape become a standard when it comes to C-section births.

"I just want other women to know that this is out there, that there's a possibility," Horton said. "You know, when you really advocate for yourself and your child you can make changes."

Jarrelle headed to Milwaukee to work with Wasserman at Columbia St. Mary's and to thank him for believing in their mission to help more moms.