

TOPIC: BIRTH

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SUBJECT: BIRTH OF A NEW BABY

- I attended to a woman paralyzed on her delivery. The paralyzed pregnant mother had been in labour for two weeks. The sisters from the hospital came and saw her they couldn't do anything so they went back. I was asked by the pregnant womans mother to come and attend to her daughter because they heard that I have attended to many woman giving birth. I went up to the paralyzed woman's house and I was really touched when I saw her. I knew that she was near her grave. I attended to her quickly and she gave birth to her baby that same day. The new mother and the baby were both healthy. When I attend to a delivery this is the time I do and show my very best to help the mother and also see that the baby is not hurt. I have attended to many woman giving birth in here. When I hear that a baby is born dead or something had happened I usually go up and ask what happens and attend to the baby. When I am attending to a pregnant woman's delivery my only hope is in God. When I hear that a baby or the mother dies in the hospital during delivery I usually asked where did the nurse go wrong.

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As we know that when someone is delivery life and death is on her palms. She'll struggle for life.

- Could you talk on the most important period of a woman's pregnancy?

When a woman is carrying she will have morning sickness during her early months. She'll be weak and choosy on what food she wants.

- Is there a tabu that she is to keep during her pregnancy?

When a woman is carrying she is not to sleep with her husband. The woman's husband is to stay out of the pregnant mothers way.

- What are some troubles or difficulties that the woman face when she gives birth?

A woman can find difficulties in giving birth to her baby if she doesn't tell her doctor that she is in labour. Some woman can be in labour for days this could be a problem to her. I had ten children and I attended to them myself. They are all alive no one dead.

- What kind of food does the carrying should eat?

The carrying should keep on eating at all times. Her stomach is not to go hungry because this is the time the baby is taking shape in the mother.

- I believe you have come across time when you are asked to

attend to a pregnant mother in the middle of the night or early in the morning.

- How do you know that the woman is giving birth to her baby?
When the pregnant mother is at the climax of her labour. This shows that the baby is not far. When I attend to a woman I wouldn't allow any men to be present in the house. Young girls can stay to see the experience a pregnant mother is to go through when she is delivering.

- Could you explain how the woman is laid for delivery?
When the pregnant mother knows that she is in the climax of her labour she will lie herself down because her whole body is weak. The woman lies on a spread mat with her legs standing apart to make way for the coming baby. She's to lie this way so that baby is not blocked. Some woman would hold a small piece of object to help them as they push.
As the baby is at the door the pregnant mother is to control her breath giving short soft pushes to pushes the baby down slowly when I know that the baby is due I would ask the pregnant mother to take a big breath and push her baby out. The pregnant mother could be killed if the baby is not born the right way. When the baby is born I would hold the amblical cord up and ask the new mother to breath slowly so that the TOKATOKA falls out. One thing we should know that the TOKATOKA and the amblical is very important when one is

attending to a woman's delivery. This two things are important because it wraps the child which in the mothers wombs and it is to be handle with care. Sometimes baby are born well but because of how nurse handle the amblical cord, this can effect the baby and sometimes if this is not handled with care the baby can lose his sight.

- Could you talk on when the amblical cord is cut?

When the amblical cord is cut the vuku will first measure a pace from the baby's side, tie a string and cut the amblical cord. When the one pace piece of amblical cord on the child's side has fallen the baby's parents will keep it until it is nice and dry before it is taken and buried. On the top of this amblical the baby's father will plant a cocconut tree to show where the baby's amblical cord had been buried.

- What happens to the TOKATOKA?

The Tokatoka Will fall out, sometimes it is sticks on the baby's back the VUKU will slowly massage the TOKATOKA from the childs back until it falls out. When it has fallen it will be taken and buried.

- Is the TOKATOKA recognised as an important thing?

The TOKATOKA is also important when the baby is born the TOKATOKA will also falls out. I will closely look to see if it is clean or dirty if there are marks on the TOKATOKA this shows that the baby will get sickly but if the TOKATOKA

is clean this is a sign of a healthy baby.

- When there are sports or marks on the TOKATOKA, I will also have to check the new mother because this is a sign that she could also get sick. I will give her some Fijian medicine herbs to prevent her from getting sick. Sometimes some people when they hear of Fijian Medicine the first thing that comes into their mind is devil.

- What is the medicine given to pregnant mothers if they find it difficult to give birth?

When the woman is in labour and finds it difficult to deliver her baby the vuku will give her a medicine. When she takes this medicine she will give birth just after taking the medicine. When the child is born the new mother will also be giving other Fijian medicine to help her regain her strength and built up her lost looks. But if this is all done and the new mothers face is still the same. No change found in her the vuku will know that there is still some bad blood in the mothers stomach that needs to flow out. So the vuku will again look for some more stronger Fijian Medicine to wash the dirt out.

- Is there anymore that you would like to say on this subject about birth?

If the wife was pregnant as a result of adultery with another man and did not tell her husband the truth she will face a lot of difficulties in birth.

Her real husband is ignorant of the fact that the baby his wife is carrying is not his. When the woman gives birth the baby will pop out and goes back in six times before it comes out. This is a sign that the baby is somebody else.

Sometimes the baby will keep on popping out and going back and will only come out when the pregnant lay admits the truth. At this stage the pregnant woman should not be ashamed of anything because life and death is in what she says. This is what we call NA SAU NI GONE.

- Why is that some babies are born dead?

If a baby is born dead this shows that the mother had been trying to drop the baby during her early months of pregnancy. Another reason could be that the mother didn't have enough strength to push the baby out. Sometimes this could be a result of a fight between the clan and the couple that is why the baby is born dead. If there is a dispute between the pregnant woman and the clan the carrying mother and her husband will have to go down to the Turaga ni Mataqali and present to him a yaqona for the KANI SORO saying that the woman is sorry for what she had done. When a girl is married to a villager she should bear in mind that she is counted as one of that village girls and she is to follow the village rules. When the woman has given birth she is to take care. She's not to sit on cold water or allow herself to get cold. She's got to keep herself warm if she doesn't want to get sick.

- A new mother is looked after and cared for properly. Her meals are cooked for her and she is cared for properly so she would not get sick.

I once went up to Wainibokasi to visit a pregnant woman when I got there she was already taken to the hospital and had given birth. The baby was born dead, that's what I heard.

I went and asked the doctor why did the baby die but they did not tell me the truth. I saw the dead baby and I knew straight away the reason of his death.

- Could you talk about the operation that is done at the hospital?

The reason why there is caeser at the hospital is that before the baby is due the doctors or nurses attending the patient tells the patient to push.

The pregnant mother would push and push trying to get the baby out but can't because the baby is not yet due. So the woman is out of breath and when the time comes for her to push she has no more breath that is why the doctors would operate her.

It is an important occasion when a woman gives birth to her baby because first another the visitor is a blessing from God and second that the woman had crossed over safely the valleys of death. There is rejoicing in a clan, a tribe, a family when the mother and baby comes home safely.

When a woman is giving birth the only hope is in Christ. There is no use crying or wailing because this will not do us any good. We are to only put our hope on Christ. When a woman comes to delivering a person out into this world only then does she realise the pain and sorrows of an individual.

- What happens if the baby born is a first born?

The first born in the house is the pet of the house. She is called the DRA TABU. Everything she wants from a house will be given to her because of her birth title. That is why the first born is always the respect of the children in a family.

- Who is responsible for naming the baby?

Usually the name is given to the baby on the fourth night.. The baby's name is given by the boy's father.

- What happens if the baby is given a chief's name?

If the name given to the child is from another tribe or Mataqali this mataqali here will grumble saying why does the baby be given a name from that tribe why not given a name from our own tribe. Nowadays to name a baby is not important as it was in the olden days.

- Is there any taboo that the new mother is required to keep after she's given birth?

New mothers are forbidden to do any work until she comes to the fourth night when a feast is thrown. This was practised from the olden days and still carries on to this day.

This magiti is called the BURUA for the baby and the mother celebrating that they have come out alive from the grave side.

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After the fourth night the members of the couples tribe will return to their homes and that is the last thing done to the new mother and her baby that is all.

Thank you very much.

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