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May 6, 2009 5:36 pm US/Central

911 Operator Helps With Parking Lot Baby Delivery



Reporting
Nerissa Knight

FORT WORTH (CBS 11 News) — It's easily one of the biggest fears for an expectant mom - not making it to the hospital in time to deliver the baby. That happened to one North Texas woman recently, and when she suddenly went into labor, it was a 911 dispatcher who was there to help.

Expectant mother Courtney Gaddis was only 24 weeks pregnant when she went into labor in a parking lot. But it was the 911 call to Medstar that made all the difference.

During the 911 call, dispatcher Rebecca Sims directed, "Put the cord between your thumb and your middle finger and gently feel for a pulse, okay?"

Medstar Director of Operations Matt Zavadsky explained Gaddis' situation. "What happened is called a prolapsed cord. That's where the umbilical cord actually gets wedged between the baby's head and the birth canal. And once that happens the baby loses circulation; the baby could die within minutes."

It was a dangerous situation, even if in a delivery room. The 30-year-old pregnant woman unexpectedly went into labor.

Gaddis was in a Fort Worth parking lot when she went into labor. After dialing 911 Medstar's ever-calm dispatcher Rebecca Sims, talked Gaddis through the delivery.

With no hospital, no Lamaze instructor, no team of doctors, or nurses, Gaddis had already delivered the baby's umbilical cord, while in her car.

Sims remained calm and with only helpful bystanders on the scene, she gave direction until emergency crews arrived. Gaddis was transported to a local hospital where she delivered the baby by emergency cesarean section.

For her actions Sims has received recognition from the National Academy of Emergency Dispatch. She received the 2009 Dispatcher of the Year Award.

"It could have had a very different outcome," explained Sims. "I just found out today that the baby did make it, so that's by the grace of God."

Zavadsky said he couldn't be happier for the



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Medstar 911 dispatcher Rebecca Sims.
 KTVT / KTXA

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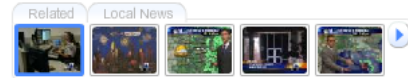


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mother and pleased with Sims. "We are very proud of Becca. It takes a lot to be an emergency medical dispatcher; you can imagine the emotion," he said. "She did a phenomenal job, not only calming the mom down but really giving great instructions to the bystanders to help save this baby's life."

Little baby Christian weighed just one pound, six ounces, when he was born. Four months later Christian weighs seven pounds and remains in the hospital.
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