

Austin's Journey

A NICU alumni story

I HAD A SEIZURE AT HOME caused by eclampsia. I was airlifted to the UW Medical Center. Very shortly after arriving, I had Austin by emergency Cesarean section to save both our lives.

He was a whopping 3 pounds and it was love at first sight. But, I was terrified.

I was also thankful that he was alive and doing very well, considering how traumatic his entry into the world was.



Austin in the NICU

In the NICU, everything went pretty smoothly, except we had a little trouble getting Austin off his Hi-Flow nasal cannula. He had bad reflux and he would constantly drop his heart rate. This held us back on feeding by mouth, and ultimately kept us in the NICU for 87 days. He also had high blood pressure.

I lived at the NICU. The staff was amazing and so friendly. I felt like the nurses truly cared about my son. They always kept me informed and we all worked together to get Austin healthy. He loved kangaroo care and we loved to snuggle all day and watch Netflix.

The day I got to bring Austin home was both exciting and scary. We went home with a feeding tube. But, NICU staff prepared me very well for taking him home.

After about a week, my little Doctor Baby decided he was going to get hold of his feeding tube and pull it out as often as he could. Finally, we decided to leave it out and let him try to do it all with the bottle. He did amazingly well.

Being home has been great. Now he is just like any normal healthy baby. It has been a long road and many doctor appointments. But his blood pressure is now normal. He is a very happy boy and loves everyone – especially his best friend Wyatt, who was in the NICU with us.

Austin is always smiling and such an easygoing guy. He loves to be home, but he is such a ladies' man. So he definitely misses all his NICU nurses!



Austin at home

What is one thing you wish someone had told you about the NICU?

Setbacks happen. Don't let them discourage you.

What is one survival tip you would like to pass on to a new NICU parent?

Get out and go on walks or go to the art group. I lived at the hospital the whole time Austin was in the NICU, so fresh air was very important.