



Timothy and Tessie's Journey

A NICU alumni story

FINDING OUT WE WERE PREGNANT with twins – a boy and a girl – was one of the best days of our lives.

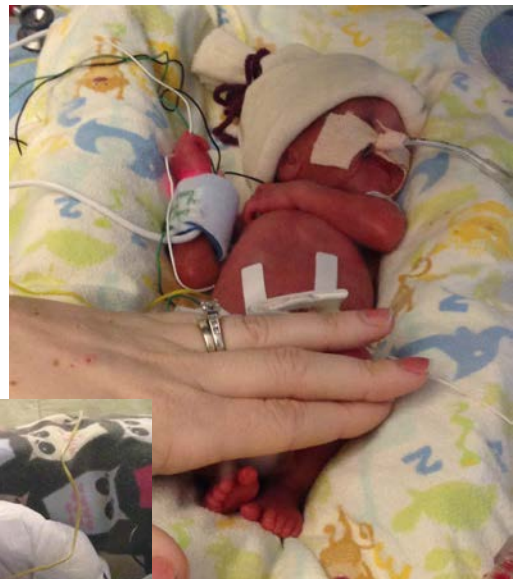
The first 20 weeks of my pregnancy were pretty normal. At week 20, I went in for an extensive ultrasound, measuring all the parts of our tiny babies, when they discovered a shortening of my cervix. I was put on mandatory bed rest.

A week later I was back at the OB for another check of my cervix. I never went back home. I was transferred by ambulance to UWMC, a 2-hour drive from home. I was only 21 weeks along, so saying that I was scared is an understatement

When I arrived at UWMC, I was quickly introduced to a doctor from the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. He was very nice and he was also very direct. He said that things did not look good for us. We were asked to make decisions that we never thought were possible, just a few weeks after finding out our dreams of having a family were coming true.

I was in bed in the antepartum unit for 3 weeks and 2 days. On the morning of April 14, I woke up in labor. I was alone, and my husband was over 2 hours away.

But there was no stopping my labor, as I had developed an infection. The babies needed to be delivered by emergency Cesarean section.



Timmy in the NICU



Tessie in the NICU

Timothy, Jr. was born weighing 1 pound 12 ounces and Tessie weighed 1 pound 9 ounces. The first time I laid eyes on our babies was a very surreal and emotional moment. Something I had never expected to see in my lifetime was lying in front of my eyes in an incubator. My babies looked so frail and lifeless with tubes and wires all over them. These babies I couldn't keep inside me were now my reality.

I wish I could say our stay in the NICU was uneventful, but it was filled with many traumatic moments for our family. During week 3, our son became very sick and almost didn't make it. I wish I had been more prepared for that moment, more than any other moment in our whole NICU stay.

Timmy had come down with meningitis, group B strep. That night still brings nightmares, as our room quickly filled with nurses and doctors. I was told to prepare for the worst and call my family! For the next 13 days, my son fought for his life, and ended up pulling through, thank God.

At week 6, I became very sick from complications from my C-section. I was in the hospital at UWMC for 10 days and had 3 surgeries. The NICU staff really pulled together for my family and went the extra mile to make sure I had everything I needed, from delivering breast pump supplies directly to my room, to sharing cute projects about our babies they made to put in my room. They were also very caring for me and my needs when I was up visiting the babies, and made sure I was comfortable and had everything I needed.

After those major scares, we pretty much lived through everything else that was thrown our way. Tessie was discharged after 118 days in the NICU with a feeding tube, and Timothy was discharged on day 130 with oxygen and a feeding tube.



Tessie and Timmy at 1 year