

Press Release: Quadruplets Born at AMITA Health Hinsdale

Mary Pat and Tony Burch were already thrilled to be pregnant when the doctor told them in August that they were expecting triplets. A week later after another ultrasound, they got another surprise. There were four babies, not three.

“We wanted a big family, but we thought we’d be able to spread it out more,” said Burch, 29. “Instead we got an instant upgrade.”

Their family of three (big sister Alice is 23 months) became a family of seven on Jan. 24 at AMITA Health Adventist Medical Center, Hinsdale when the quadruplets arrived via C-section.

Henry weighed three pounds, eight ounces; Nathaniel weighed three pounds, six ounces; Samuel arrived at three pounds, two ounces and Molly was two pounds, 14 ounces.

Husband and father Tony, 30, is a Captain in the Army, now serving in South Korea. Despite the distance, Tony was with Mary Pat in the delivery room thanks to the wonders of technology, namely Facetime.

“He could see the babies as they were taken to the warmers and he got the rundown on how they were doing and how much they weighed,” said Burch.

“The quadruplets are beautifully the same size, which is great,” said Kim Carmignani, director of the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) at Hinsdale. “We don’t like to see one growing more rapidly than the others because this can cause systemic problems. The doctors watched her closely. The Mom is so positive, it’s like she willed this.”

When Burch’s blood pressure rose on Jan. 23, her doctors made the decision to do the C-section the next day.

“I was ready to see the babies,” Burch said. “I felt confident going into the delivery room. I knew I was in the right hands, and everything went off without a hitch.”

Team Effort

It’s no wonder. According to the attending neonatologist Anthony Bell, M.D., there were 23 medical staffers in the delivery room when the quads were born, including two obstetricians, four neonatologists, (physicians who are specialists in caring for critically ill newborns) labor and delivery nurses, NICU nurses, and clinical coordinators. Respiratory therapists were on hand to provide respiratory support for the infants, as frequently the lungs are not fully developed in premature babies.

“It was a challenge to keep the team organized because of the number of people required to be present for the births,” Bell said. “We ran practice drills before the delivery to make sure each person knew their role and could perform their duties as each baby was born.

“In the NICU, we have wonderful successes and miracles,” Bell said. “When everything goes smoothly it puts a smile on your face. This outcome was happy for the Burch family and the babies, their most prized possessions. It makes our work very rewarding.”

The last time quadruplets were born at Hinsdale was in March of 2011. According to government statistics, the birth rate for triplets and more in the U.S. is just under 113 per 100,000 births. In all of 2014, the last full year for which statistics are available, only 246 quadruplets (that’s about 62 sets) were born.

“A lot of people have asked me if I became pregnant through in vitro fertilization,” Burch said. “It wasn’t that. I became pregnant after one round of low dose fertility meds.”

Tony, an Army engineer originally from Hoopston, Ill., is stationed at Fort Hood, Texas. When Tony was deployed to South Korea in September, Mary Pat and Alice returned to her hometown of Tinley Park to live with her parents, Julie and Charlie Schultz, to await the birth of the babies. Tony’s parents, Kim and Todd Burch of Hoopston, have also been very supportive, Burch said.

After doing research, Burch chose AMITA Health Hinsdale as her hospital.

“Hinsdale has a level III NICU, which I wanted,” Burch said. “I talked to friends about it and I heard nothing but great things about the NICU and the staff there. The hospital has been phenomenal. All of the staff has been exemplary as far as service and care.”

Kangaroo Care

Burch is grateful that the staff has helped her bond with the babies, not an easy task when the tiny ones need to be cared for and monitored in intensive care. She has been pumping breast milk to bring to the hospital and has been “kangarooing,” a type of bonding known as “kangaroo mother care.”

“I have been able to do this with all of the babies at least once,” Burch said, a few days after delivery. “I put the baby on my chest and hold him, or her, while I’m in the rocking chair. They get the skin-to-skin interaction.”

Burch was discharged four days after the quadruplets were born. The babies are expected to leave the hospital in several more weeks. Tony was able to meet his new, expanded family while on leave, arriving four days after the births.

Mary Pat, Alice and the quadruplets will live with her family in Tinley Park until Tony returns from South Korea in June.