

Baby D's Journey



Baby D is an 18 month old female, born on February 15, 2020, at 36 weeks gestation via emergency C-section. Baby D emerged weighing 7 lbs. 11 oz. Post-delivery she was in the NICU for 25 days. During that time she spent 2 ½ weeks in an incubator, under UV lights due to high bilirubin levels, and was on a CPAP machine. Baby D was discharged on March 7, 2020, with an apnea monitor. Baby D was referred to early intervention due to suspected delays in her motor skills.

Baby D is the youngest of three children. Mrs. D describes all of her pregnancies as complicated and high risk due to diagnosis of two autoimmune diseases and uterine atony during previous pregnancies. After Baby D's delivery, Mrs. D learned that an intraamniotic infection caused Baby D's rapid heart rate which resulted in the early delivery. Mrs. D describes the delivery as traumatic and shared that

her physical recovery was painful but faster as she was motivated by her desire to see Baby D in the NICU. She recalled how helpless she felt after Baby D's birth as she was being given CPR and rubbed to increase her cry. She reminisced on how she couldn't be by her side because she was being stitched up from the C-section and she felt she couldn't be there for her husband either, to reassure him that things would be ok. Emotionally, she shared that she grieved the loss of what she expected. She shared that she felt detached from Baby D at times as physical touch was only allowed every 3 hours in the NICU and was limited to her assisting with care (i.e. taking temperature, changing diaper, etc.) with medical supervision. She shared that she experienced moments of frustration and anger with hospital staff, resentment towards her partner, and feeling isolated. She expressed having "mommy guilt" with her 2 girls at home and often wondered what she could've done differently.

Mrs. D explained that she waited to make a referral to early intervention because she hoped Baby D would catch up and she was afraid to invite someone new to meet her because she was protective of her and didn't want to think that she was not doing the same things as other 1 year olds. Additionally, she was suspected to have pneumonia at birth and she would get bronchiolitis with every cold so she thought why introduce her to new people.

Mrs. D disclosed that this was the first time she has let anyone interact with Baby D outside of those in her household, her sister, and physicians.

