

BUMCP Quadruplets Transcript

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Jennifer Stepenosky, Mother

[00:00:10.29] So when we started on our journey and we found out that we were originally expecting quintuplets, we knew that we were going to need specialty care. So we sought that out back home East in New Jersey but then quickly realized that we needed more specialty care. And we found Dr. Elliott through online resources through a mom group or another group. That's how we got here.

[00:00:41.65] This has been 10 years in the making. We got married in 2008. And we waited a little while to try for our family just because we wanted to travel and get our careers kind of kick started and things like that. Then we were ready to start a family. And, of course, it didn't happen for us naturally. So we sought out a fertility specialist about three years ago. And we started treatments.

[00:01:06.16] And so last year we did our first IUI, Intrauterine Insemination. In July, we found out we were pregnant with a singleton. And then in September, we found out we had a miscarriage. So we again tried in November. It didn't work. And then in December, we did our last IUI, which we decided if that didn't work, then we would kind of go to IVF as our next step.

[00:01:31.82] So that procedure was done on December 20 right before Christmas. And then January 3, we found out we were pregnant.

[00:01:39.91] Wow.

[00:01:40.82] So yeah. It's been a crazy journey ever since.

[00:01:47.88] The most difficult things for us. You know, obviously this wasn't a normal pregnancy. It's high risk. And it's a lot more care that was needed to make sure that the babies and myself were safe and got as far as we could get from gestational age. I think some of the challenges that we ran into was there's not a lot of office appointments. So more telemedicine. And that can become difficult, especially later on in the pregnancy when you really need that extra bit of care.

[00:02:15.30] The other challenging part was our families. So we found out we were pregnant and we waited until about 10 weeks to tell everybody just because we were making sure we were kind of clear and the babies were going to stick this time. And after that really everything shut down in New Jersey. So we hadn't seen our families through the whole pregnancy. So that was kind of difficult because nobody really saw us pregnant. But we did have a social distancing gender reveal, which was really fun. So yeah.

[00:02:54.08] I think for me, just really being able to listen to my body and what I needed and kind of that intuition of OK, this care that we were receiving was good but we needed that extra care and to just go for it. I think that made the difference in our pregnancy.

[00:03:13.62] Dr. Elliott has been doing this for a very, very long time. He's extremely specialized in this. And having that comfort and being able to truly trust your physician made all the difference to us. So I knew if he told me, hey, you need to do this or we need to do this, it was something we needed to do.

[00:03:35.73] Well, it's a little overwhelming with four. But I'm really excited to get them back home and eventually meet our families and kind of get settled in.

[00:03:47.77] I mean I think for me, especially, is like getting to introduce them to our wider families. I mean I know it's going to be difficult at first because we have to be very careful with them with them being so small. But I think that's the most exciting part because, again, we as much as we could tried to share our pregnancy with our family and friends through our blog and video messages and phone calls and things like that. But it's not the same. So I think it's going to be really exciting to introduce them to family.

[00:04:20.89] It can happen. As worse as you feel sometimes, you have to just know in the back of your head just stay positive as much as you can. I know for me, like when we went through the miscarriage, I felt like the loneliest person, like it was only happening to me. But then I quickly realized when I found some support groups that it actually is really common that it happened. So I think just having a really good support system, it makes all the difference.

[00:04:54.48] In doing my research, I was very thorough with the doctor just to understand more of what he's done and he's like the legend of high order multiples. So we knew that if all these other couples had faith and trust in him, then we should put our faith and trust in him as well. And in addition to that, just like I said, some of my support groups that I'm in.

[00:05:18.81] There were so many families that had utilized Dr. Elliott through their high order multiple pregnancies. And as soon as I posted, you know, hey, I need help. I need help finding a physician for high order multiples, it was just, go to Dr. Elliott. You have to call him. You have to call him.

[00:05:35.43] And with Dr. Elliott, most doctors would say, you know, set up an appointment. Let's talk. With him, I got his cell phone number. I called him. He was on the phone with me for 45 minutes, no questions asked, going through all the details of what could happen, here are some of the benefits of what we needed to do for our high order multiple pregnancy and stuff. So it was-- from there, I knew that we needed to come out here.

[00:06:03.81] So that was an experience to say. When I got admitted to the hospital in mid-May at Banner, it wasn't easy. So from the day I got admitted, we had a lot of complications. Every day was something new. Around 24 weeks, we felt the baby's-- one of the baby's sacks had ruptured. So we were dealing with all that. And actually, they were thinking that we were going to deliver around that time. So we were very lucky that we gained another three weeks [INAUDIBLE] the babies being born at 27 weeks, three days.

[00:06:42.49] So the labor process-- it actually happened pretty quickly. So we thought Monday night June 15, we were going to bed and everything was fine. And then 1 o'clock in the morning, woke up, had contractions. They quickly got to be two to three minutes apart. Everybody was in a panic. All the nurses stuff because everybody was very prepared. And they knew as soon as that was to happen, everybody was kind of in place, which was really great that they had a care team ready to go for any time we were ready.

[00:07:16.86] And then, it quickly progressed. So went to labor and delivery and from there to the OR. And at 4:44, our first baby was born.

[00:07:25.51] Oh, wow. And how many hours and how many minutes apart are the babies?

[00:07:30.75] They're one minute apart exactly. So 4:44 to 4:47. Yep.

[00:07:37.10] Wow.

[00:07:37.70] Yeah. So one minute apart.

[00:07:43.20] So I think it was a game time decision in the OR. We had all the girls' names picked out. We just didn't know which baby to which name until we saw them. With Elliott, we had a couple of names that we were thinking about leaning towards. We really wanted each kid to have a nickname. So we were just-- we liked Elliott Jacob, EJ. So it was a game time decision. I was laying in the OR. He saw Elliott come out. And that was it.

[00:08:10.73] [INAUDIBLE] That's so sweet. I love that they [INAUDIBLE].

[00:08:14.33] It's exciting. But it's also extremely nerve wracking to eventually have four kiddos that we're taking care of on our own. But I think once we get home, a lot of our family is there. And they're willing to help. And so I think that the transition will be difficult. But we'll get through it. We got through this far. So we'll get through it.

Nicholas Stepenosky, Father

[00:08:43.45] Just knowing that it was such a challenge for us to get as far as we did and all the different things that she had to go through to get us here, just trying to do everything and anything I could to help her out, whether it was driving her to appointments or even just giving her her space or talking it out late night, waking up in the middle of night and talking it out, just trying to do whatever I could. A lot of the burden was on her. So trying to do as much as I could.

[00:09:21.26] Well, it's kind of funny because when we first found out that we were having quintuplets, she brought up this whole, there's a doctor in Arizona that specializes in this field. I was like, you're kidding. There's no way we're ever going to do that or have to do. That's just-- it's a crazy idea. But as things progressed and we kind of saw the care that she needed, the care that the babies needed, it actually became more and more of a talking point until it really did

have to become a reality. Just wanted to do what we needed to do for her to make sure that she was safe and do what we needed to do for them to make sure that they were safe.

[00:10:11.59] We have four different individuals who are already starting to show four different personalities. So just looking forward to riding that roller coaster and seeing who they develop into and what they take to to see who takes after mom, who takes after dad, and just enjoy it while we can.

[00:10:34.49] It was just kind of looking at some of the facial features and walking through the name and seeing like, does it really fit? You can look at somebody. And you hear their name. And you're like, oh, that's a natural fit for that person. And just taking that time.

[00:10:58.45] Yeah. I mean dad, do you want to do that?

[00:11:00.29] You want me to do that? That's fine.

[00:11:03.30] So as they came out, the order is baby A is Kaitlyn. She was the smallest coming out. Baby B is Elliott. He was next. And for the longest time, he was kind of sandwiched in between two of the girls there. Baby C is Addison. And Baby D is Amelia.

B-Roll

11:36 – 13:35 Caitlin (June 24, 2020)

13:40 – 14:38 Caitlin (August 4, 2020)

14:43 – 16:51 Elliottt (June 24, 2020)

16:56 – 17:42 Elliottt (August 4, 2020)

17:47 – 19:40 Addison (June 24, 2020)

19:45 – 21:02 Addison (August 4, 2020)

21:07 – 23:19 Emilia (June 24, 2020)

23:24 – 24:05 Emilia (August 4, 2020)

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