



Multifetal Gestation Patient Profile

AH is a 41-year-old woman who got pregnant with twins after infertility treatment. Her pregnancy was going well until her ultrasound at 22 weeks of gestation showed some worrisome findings. It looked like her second twin didn't have enough amniotic fluid and was not growing well. AH was asked to decrease her activity and be seen in clinic weekly. Over the next month, it looked like this twin had stopped growing, stopped making amniotic fluid, and the blood flow in the umbilical cord was very abnormal. On ultrasound, twin A had an estimated weight of 1 lbs 7oz (35%) and twin B had an estimated weight of 1lb 1oz (less than 10%)

At the same time, AH had suddenly developed high blood pressure and protein in her urine, or preeclampsia, and delivery of the twins seemed imminent. AH was admitted to the hospital for bed rest, increased fetal monitoring, betamethasone (a corticosteroid used to help mature the twins' lungs and prevent bleeding into their brains), and magnesium sulfate to decrease the risk of cerebral palsy. AH had a consult with neonatologists regarding the risks of preterm birth and long-term complications in babies born so early. Since twin B was so small and had no amniotic fluid, his lungs were not expected to develop and his risk for long-term handicap and death were very high. Due to these risks, the family and their doctors made the difficult decision to provide just comfort care for twin B. They would let him die peacefully in their arms.

Over the next week, AH's preeclampsia worsened with increasing blood pressures and severe headaches, so the decision was made to proceed with delivery at 29 2/7 weeks of gestation. AH had a cesarean birth. Twin A was delivered and weighed 2 pounds 4 ounces. She was handed off to the awaiting pediatricians who began resuscitation. Twin B was then delivered and weighed 1 pound 4 ounces. He was wrapped in warm blankets and given to AH and her husband. Over the next 24 hours, twin B was kept warm and held by his parents. He was breathing on his own and he did not die. After 24 hours AH and her husband asked the pediatricians to reevaluate twin B. Since he was breathing well with a normal amount of oxygen in his blood, the decision was made to bring him to the special care nursery and begin resuscitation 24 hours later.

Twin A stayed in the special care nursery for 55 days and was discharged with a weight of 4 pounds 1 ounce. Twin B stayed in the special care nursery for 73 days and was discharged with a weight of 3 pounds 15 oz. The twins are now two and a half years old. They are developing normally and meeting all of their milestones; however, twin B continues to be very small for his age.