

PREEMIES TODAY

Families Helping Families

PREEMIE OF THE MONTH:

This month's preemie comes from the other side of the globe. Aimee-Rose proves that preemies everywhere are thriving. Here is her story, as told by mom, Amanda.

Aimee-Rose Kimberly Barton-Osborne was born June 17th 2003 by emergency C section in wintery Tauranga, New Zealand. Aimee weighed 4 lb 13 oz at birth, she had very little fluid surrounding her and her umbilical cord had started to shut down and reverse on her. I was suffering from really bad toxemia that took many months after she had been born to go back to normal, it was a scary time for us all.

Aimee is the youngest of three children, she has two older siblings. Her oldest sister is called Sarah-Louise she was full term and induced, she did not breath when she was born, with first appar of 3, 6 then finally 9. Aimee has a big brother called Bailey, we went into premature labor at 23 weeks and managed to hold off delivery until 25 weeks and one day, Bailey was born by emergency c section at 676 gms. (1 lb 4 oz) He has many "labels" that continue as he grows. Bailey is now 18.4 kilograms (40 lb 5 oz).

When I pregnant with Aimee I was worried about going into premature labor, due to having Bailey extremely early on in the pregnancy. I had a great midwife and was under specialists as I was classed as a high risk pregnancy due to having two early miscarriages and one late miscarriage/stillborn at 17 weeks gestation in 1999. We got past the 23 week mark and no problems...yay!... 25 weeks still one piece...even better!! And then started to sigh that at least this looked like it was going to go to term, when at 30 weeks we were still chugging along really easy.

I woke up Saturday morning at 31 weeks with contractions every five minutes; I tried to ignore them hoping they would just "go away" and not wanting to admit defeat and the reality that this little girl was going to

come regardless. After a couple of hours of the contractions not going no matter what I did, it was decided to go and just be checked out... that was it. I was admitted that morning and monitored and given meds to calm things down until the Monday morning when I would be given a scan to check on everything. I was cracking jokes at the medical staff about ok so where are you going to send me... Waikato hospital or Auckland hospi-



tal... oh please send me to Waikato I want to go back "home" to where I had Bailey. We all joked about it all for light humor to get thru the tension and stress of the moment. We headed off for the scan and went back to the ward for the results. I had only just gotten back into bed when people started to crowd my door, being cheeky I said so what is it... Waikato hospital then? I was stunned when I heard a voice yes that's right the ambulance is on its way now it will be here in five minutes!!! "no way"... "yes way"... "haha u r kidding me"... I looked up and there was a nurse coming up to me with those horrible needles.... "oh crap steroids...you really are

not kidding are you", "no its for real". It was found then that Aimee was small for size and had very little fluid surrounding her. They had hardly done the jabs when the ambulance staff came to load me up....reality sucked big time that day.

We spent about a month in Waikato hospital, cooking and trying to make it thru each day. We came back to Tauranga hospital on the start of week 34 as the unit could cope with Aimee should she be born at that time.

I went into the unit every morning for monitoring and then was allowed to go home and just rest. It all started to go downhill a day or so before Aimee was born. My blood pressure went high as a kite and we were both starting to get stressed and sick. It was decided that I should be induced and this baby to come out as her cord was starting to go hay-wire on her. Aimee had to be out and sooner the better. The induction was not working so it was decided that we would try again the next morning as it was getting late, I broke down at that thought as I was not going to allow my daughter to die inside me, her brother Ashley was born 18 June 1999, after his heart had stopped, he had cystic hygroma with hydrops. I was beside myself at this point so it was decided that an emergency c-section be done immediately. Aimee was born within the hour, I heard my daughter cry and scream the sound was beautiful and amazing... I had never heard one of my children make a sound when they had been born.

I got into a heated discussion with the theater staff about Aimee while I was being stitched up! As Aimee was lifted up crying they said here is your tiny little baby daughter!..." she's not tiny she's huge" .."no she is tiny she is premature"...this went on for nearly a minute..." no she is huge.... Her brother was tiny..He was a 25 weeker 676 gms born"...hmm "ok yes she is huge then isn't she" fits of laughter filled the room.

Focus of the Month:

Increasing Calories

Some infants, toddlers and children need help gaining weight due to poor appetite, selective eating or medical issues that put them at nutritional risk. Increasing calories, without increasing volume of food consumed, will help your child achieve "catch up" growth and gain weight successfully.

Tips for Infants: select calorically dense baby foods*

Cereals:

Jarred w/fruit are higher in calories
Prepared Cereals: Make cereals with formula or half & half
Add: 1/2 tsp butter/margarine (non-hydrogenated) to 2 oz's**

Fruits:

Peaches, Apple-Prune/Banana, Tropical Blend
Banana, Apricots with mixed fruit, Prune w/Apple
Banana-Pineapple (Stage 3), Banana/Strawberry (Stage 3)
Banana-Blueberry (Tender Harvest)

Fruit Juices:

White Grape, Mixed Fruit, Apple-Banana with calcium
Berry Juice Medley, Berry Punch, Fruit Punch
Smoothies/Dairy
Orchard Fruit Wild Berry

Vegetables:

Creamed Corn, Sweet Potato, Green Beans & Potatoes (Tender Harvest), Butternut Squash & Corn (Tender Harvest)
Add: 1 tsp margarine to every 4 oz. jar**

Meats/Dinners:

All Baby foods with gravy, Chicken Noodle, Vegetable Bacon, Apple & Chicken, Sweet Potato and Turkey, Mac & Cheese
Apples & Ham, Pears and Chicken, Vegetable Pilaf (Tender Harvest).
Spaghetti with Beef (Stage 3), lasagna with meat (Stage 3)
Beef & Egg Noodle (Stage 3), Squash-Corn & Chicken (Tender Harvest)
Add: 1 tsp margarine to every 4 oz. jar**

Desserts:

Dutch Apple, Hawaiian Delight, Banana Yogurt, Vanilla Custard Pudding, Tropical Fruit-Mango, Guava

Finger Foods:

Gerber Graduate Veggie & Arrowroot Crackers, Fruit & Cereal Bars

***Beechnut 1st Advantage Baby Foods: are very high in calories but may contain milk or eggs.**

****Smart Balance is non hydrogenated and contains 80 cal/TB**

Tips for Toddlers:

Eat with your child
Do not force feed, punish or threaten for not eating
Serve meals and snacks on a schedule. Children have small stomachs and need to be refueled often.
Provide healthy foods
Serve age appropriate servings. It is better to serve smaller servings and let your child have the opportunity to succeed. This is especially important when adding new foods.
Offer new foods with favorite ones.
Provide dipping sauces (i.e. dressing with vegetables)
Repeated exposure is the key; research suggests it takes 10-15 exposures for a child to accept a new food.

Snack Ideas for Toddlers/Children:

Protein Foods:

Liverwurst, Roast/Corned beef Hash, Custard/Flan
Yoplait Yogurt (No nonfat or low fat), Rice pudding
Le Crème Yogurt, Yo Baby Yogurt, Yumsters

Fruits/Vegetables:

Nectars, Mango (very ripe slices), Berry Applesauce, Sweet potatoes with Brown Sugar/Margarine, Creamed Corn, Avocado (very ripe slices), white grape juice

Breads:

Mini Muffins, Whole Grain Granola Bars with Fruit (avoid low fat)

Miscellaneous/Sweets

Fig/Fruit Newtons, Archway Cookies, Goldfish Crackers

This month's contributor is Sheree Hughes, RD. Ms Hughes is a nutritionist in private practice and works with the Infant Toddler Connection in Fairfax County and Falls Church, VA.

continued from cover, Aimee-Rose

Aimee was taken off to the special care baby unit, she was breathing alone ok, she only had problems with temperature regulation, sugar levels, jaundice and learning to feed took a couple of days or so. I stayed in hospital for 6 days post c section and came home with my feeder grower take home baby, she was just so beautiful.

Afew months down the track Aimee became

very irritable it was found that she had silent reflux. We have been through many meds and to this day we are still on them as her reflux has not improved. Aimee has thickened fluids, and is on Losec.

On June 17th 2006 Aimee-Rose turned three years old, she is just so funny and cheeky, and I love her to bits. Aimee-Rose is now about 15 kilograms (33 lbs) we all adore her and think she is just so cute.

When I was sitting down last night doing some of my studies (I am training as a nurse) Aimee said "I want to be a nurse, mummy"... she was flicking through a textbook...oh dear!!! Aimee's grandmother is an ex N.I.C.U. nurse, and then there is me training up to be one as well hopefully in the future... I think it may be genetic!

Local News:

Announcements:

Preemies Today Gives Donation to New Orleans NICU:

Preemies Today has donated \$1040 dollars to the Children's Hospital, New Orleans NICU to help them in their recovery from Hurricane Katrina. The money donated represents 20% of the proceeds from the Annual Celebration and Silent Auction, held this May.

The NICU at Children's has requested to use the money to buy a washer/dryer for the unit so that parents have a place to wash any clothes that they bring in for their infants to wear. It will also be used by staff to wash the bedding and blankets of infants with sensitive skin that reacts to the industrial detergents used in the hospital laundry. Preemies Today is thrilled that to be able to contribute such a useful gift to the Children's Hospital NICU. We would like to thank Roger Gorman from the Children's Hospital Development Office for his help in determining how our donation would be best spent.

July Family Outing

Please join us for our Preemies Today July Picnic at Bull Run Park in Centreville!

Time: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Date: July 15th, Saturday

Place: Bull Run Park in Centreville

We have reserved shelter space #5, which includes room for 50 people so bring in-laws, out-laws, kids, babies, husbands, wives, friends! There are picnic tables and a couple BBQ grills underneath the shelter. Also, we will be right next to the playground for the kids! Please bring a potluck dish to share like a dessert or side or chips, etc. RSVP to Stephanie Miller at 703/830-7813 or laxtodca@hotmail.com. We look forward to seeing you all!!

Directions: Take I-66 to Exit 52 (Route 29) at Centreville, drive 2 miles south, turn left onto Bull Run Post Office Road and follow the signs to the park entrance.

Support Groups:

Take a Break

Preemies Today offers meal preparation assistance, babysitting, and other additional support options for preemie families in crisis. If you are in need of assistance or would like to volunteer to help others, please contact Sara at sara@teamchae.com.

"A Friend to Talk to"

Our "Friend to Talk to" support line is up and running. Please feel free to give us a call and one of our preemie parent volunteers can offer you some much needed support. The support line telephone number is 703-552-0163, or toll free number at 1-888-712-3208.

NICU Support Group

INOVA Healthsource is continuing to offer a NICU Support group for NICU families at INOVA Fairfax. The meetings are held on the unit and vary month to month. The group is led by Lynn Kuba, RN and is a great opportunity to talk about your experience in the NICU. For more information contact INOVA Healthsource at 703-204-3366.

Preemies Today Online Chat

Join us for our monthly online chats. This is a great outlet for new parents who still can't get out for our support groups. For more information contact Julie at jkipers@lmi.org

Local Support Groups

Local support groups are going strong! On every 2nd Wednesday at 7:30 pm we hold our local support group meetings. For more information email Deborah at deborah_leaf@yahoo.com.

Yahoogroup!

Come and join our yahoogroup and meet some of our wonderful parents where you can exchange information on preemie parenting. You can subscribe at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/PreemiesToday/>

Helpful Resources:

The following are some helpful resources available by phone and online:

Prince William County Social Services:
www.co.prince-william.va.us/csb/programsandservices/

Fairfax County Department of Family Services:
(703) 324-7500
www.co.fairfax.va.us/services/dfs/

Social Security Administration:
1-800-772-1213
www.ssa.org

SIDS Mid-Atlantic
(703) 933-9100
www.sidsma.org

March of Dimes
1-800-326-BABY
(703) 425-BABY (Metro DC)
www.marchofdimes.com

Sidelines National Support
1-888-447-4754
www.sidelines.org

Early Intervention/ Infant Toddler Connection
Fairfax County- (703) 246-7121
Alexandria- (703) 838-5060
Prince William- (703) 792-7879
Calvert County- (410) 535-1955
Arlington County- (703) 228-1630

WIC
Manassas- (703) 792-4703
Woodbridge- (703) 792-7319
Springfield (703) 569-1031
Mount Vernon (703) 660-7100
Fairfax- (703) 246-7100

For a list of online resources please go to:
www.PreemiesToday.com

Mission of Preemies Today:

Preemies Today is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to reach out and provide support to families of infants born prematurely beginning at birth and throughout childhood.

Vision: We will reduce the stress of caring for a child born prematurely by creating a network of families who offer help, comfort, and understanding to one another.

Values: We strive to promote compassion, inclusiveness, understanding and patience.

Membership/Subscription Information:

We offer the Premies Today newsletter, family outings, parent support groups, preemie playgroups, and “A Friend to Talk To,” our call-in line for parents and families of preemies. Membership in our organization is free.

For a free subscription to the newsletter please email us at premienewsletter@yahoo.com. If you would like to become a member of Premies Today please email us at premiemembership@yahoo.com. Our website is **www.PremiesToday.com**

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Do you need to talk to someone who understands the preemie experience? If so, call the “Friend to Talk to” line at **1-888-712-3208**