

## **“Good things come to those who wait”**

I strongly believe that good things **do** come to those who wait. After six long years of trying to have a baby, my husband and I were finally given our precious bundle of joy on 23 October 2000.

We began trying to have a baby in September 1994, not long after I recovered from Glandular Fever. I did everything right, didn't drink alcohol, ate well and did moderate exercise to ensure a healthy pregnancy.

Each month I would cry when my periods came, what was I doing wrong? Friends and family members could fall pregnant except me. **I felt so alone and continually questioned why us? People kept saying relax your trying to hard, go on a holiday, renovate your house. We renovated our house, took an overseas holiday and still no baby.** Through desperation and frustration I got a referral to a gynaecologist. My husband was tested, we monitored my temperature for three months to check that I was ovulating, and had a Laparoscopy in August 1996, which they found slight endometriosis. My doctor then suggested we try IVF and we were referred to a fertility centre. So our IVF adventure began. The notice board in the Fertility Centre waiting room was packed with photos of IVF babies and we knew then that other couples had experienced the same frustration to become parents as we were experiencing. We were not alone.

In March 1999 I had my first full IVF, starting with a nasal spray followed by daily injections. The cycle produced 3 eggs. All three fertilised and two days later two embryos were transferred and the other frozen. The two weeks waiting for a result seemed like eternity, then it was negative. We were devastated. We attempted a frozen embryo transfer a couple of months later but the embryo did not survive the freezing process. It was not a good day that day.

I commenced my second full cycle in October 1999, again starting with the nasal spray and then daily injections with the dosage increased. This cycle produced 24 eggs, of which 19 fertilised. As it looked like I might suffer from severe hyperstimulation syndrome (OHSS) it was suggested that all 19 be frozen and that I have a frozen embryo transfer (FET) in a couple of months. After arriving home the next day I began to develop OHSS symptoms. My gynaecologist admitted me to hospital immediately. I underwent intensive treatment for the next eight days. I was extremely dehydrated and spent the next five days on a drip, and couldn't eat because I was so ill. I was finally well enough to come home when I started getting rid of the fluid.

In February 1999 I had a frozen embryo transfer. They had to thaw four embryos to get two to transfer. Again the next two weeks seemed like eternity. I wanted to be pregnant so much. When my periods didn't arrive on the due date, I had to go for a blood test. The blood test was positive and that day was one of the happiest days of our life. My husband and family were extremely excited.

### **The lack of understanding of infertility in society**

People that were not experiencing infertility did not understand what we were going through. Friends and family were afraid to tell us they were pregnant fearing that it would upset us. I got sick of people saying, “You're only young, it will happen”. People that said this already had children.

### **Coping with infertility**

The only way I got through this frustrating time in my life was by doing meditation and yoga, reading as much literature about IVF as I could and we joined a local IVF support group that was formed. The support group was great because you could meet with other couples who knew what you were experiencing. One of my workmates was a huge support as she had twins by IVF in 1991. She constantly told me...don't give up because 'good things come to those who wait.' I do believe this.

Most importantly talk to your partner and let them know what you're feeling. They too are suffering. Infertility and IVF can take over your life. For a while there all I could think about was IVF. It is important to have other areas of interest so you're not thinking of IVF 100% of the time.

My pregnancy went well and our little boy, Ryan was born by caesarean on October 23 at 9.46am weighing 7lbs 14oz and breech.

He has brought us so much joy to us and we still can't believe that he's ours. It's wonderful to be greeted every time he wakes with a huge smile. Some days parenting it tiring and exhausting and it is a 24-hour job but we wouldn't trade him for the world. Our biggest challenge now is to be the best parents possible.

With 15 embryos left we hope to give Ryan a brother or sister in the future, but if we were to use all of the embryos and not get another baby we would be satisfied with Ryan, as he alone is a huge bonus and a precious gift.

So please don't give up... good things do come to those who wait.

P & N (NSW)