

When care is critical

Experienced NICU team saves baby's life

For 38 weeks Kristin Einck had a perfect pregnancy. During a routine doctor's visit she mentioned the baby didn't seem to be moving. After several tests there were no problems detected. The following day Kristin felt like she was having contractions and the day after that, she again noticed she hadn't felt the baby move.

"We called St. Luke's Birth Care and told them what was going on and they told us to come right in," said Kristin Einck. "They did several tests and an ultrasound and they didn't see the baby move."

"Dr. Michelle Hocking left the room and about six nurses came back in and told us 'this baby needs to come out right now'," said Landon Einck. "That's when

they started preparing us for an emergency C-section. It all happened so quickly – it's all kind of a blur actually."

"I remember during the C-section hearing the doctor say 'here he comes' and then Landon stood up to look," said Kristin. "I anticipated they would put the baby on my chest but they didn't. I remember we kept saying 'why isn't he crying?'"

"They let me walk over and see my son, who we named Hudson," said Landon. "He was white as a ghost. They didn't need to tell me something was wrong – it was obvious."

Quick diagnosis

Hudson was immediately rushed to St. Luke's Newborn Intensive Care Unit (NICU) where Cedar Rapids most experienced team of doctors and nurses quickly diagnosed Hudson with a massive fetomaternal hemorrhage.

"He actually transferred a lot of his blood prior to birth back through the placenta to his mom," said Dennis Rosenblum, MD, St. Luke's NICU medical director. "When Hudson was born his blood volume was only about one-fifth of what a normal baby's blood

volume would be, which is considered a very massive hemorrhage."

"I didn't see Hudson after he was born because he needed immediate care," said Kristin. "When I did finally see him in the NICU he was on oxygen and there were all kinds of cords attached to him – that's when it hit me – this was very serious. I didn't realize how bad Hudson was until I went up there and saw him. It was indescribable – just awful to see your child in that situation."

"It's extremely rare to have that severe of a fetomaternal hemorrhage," said Dr. Rosenblum. "Hudson actually lost 80 percent of his blood. Many babies with that severe of a hemorrhage would have died, but because our NICU team was able to diagnose his condition quickly and do the necessary things to help make Hudson better – such as increase his blood volume, place him on mechanical ventilation and give him intravenous medication to help his heart pump adequately – he fortunately recovered without any consequences."

"Hudson was very sick," said Landon. "He had four blood transfusions, countless tests and stayed in the NICU for

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Dennis Rosenblum, MD, St. Luke's NICU medical director

nearly two weeks. The St. Luke's NICU team was extremely good at explaining everything to us."

Superior technology and experience

St. Luke's NICU has over 30 years of experience – caring for approximately 400 babies each year.

"The technology and experience of St. Luke's NICU is really unsurpassed," said Dr. Rosenblum. "Our doctors, nurse practitioners, nurses and respiratory therapists have seen the vast majority of the smallest and sickest babies in the Cedar Rapids area over the last three decades. The number of patients you care for each year matters. I believe, and published medical literature supports that you need to see a certain number of NICU babies each year in order to develop and maintain a certain level of skill."

"When you're pregnant you never think you are going to have an emergency C-section," said Kristin. "You never think your baby will end up in the NICU but I tell you if we had to be there – St. Luke's is where I wanted to be – no doubt in my mind."

"The whole time we were at St. Luke's there was not one issue to complain about," said Landon. "Everything and everyone was 100 percent, top notch. Everyone was there for us – helping us through the toughest time in our lives."

Family-centered care

"We have been practicing developmental, family-centered care for over a decade and you can't just say you do it – it has to be a part of your culture that you do on a daily basis," said Dr. Rosenblum.

"We created these great relationships with the staff at St. Luke's," said Kristin. "It's way more than checking in and out – this is going to be a long-term bond with St. Luke's."

"It was great to bring Hudson home," said Landon. "But at the same time – we really look forward to the day when we go back and reconnect with the NICU team and thank them in person

again – to tell them how good of a job they did. We can't thank them enough."

"I am hands down a St. Luke's fan," said Kristin. "St. Luke's absolutely saved our baby's life. If we had been anywhere else I don't know if Hudson would have survived."

■ **See for yourself why three out of four moms choose St. Luke's to bring their baby into the world, log on to stlukescr.org to take a virtual tour.**

The Einck family in their Cedar Rapids home.