

Ashley's Story

Any pregnancy is a special one, and I might be biased, but Ashley was that extra bit special. He was a fighter who had the heart of a lion.

Why was he so special? To explain why, I need to jump back in time and give you a little background on our story (it won't be long I promise!)

Nathan and I started IVF treatment in 2011. After an ectopic pregnancy (lost left tube) and 2 early miscarriages, we finally had the joyous news of conceiving twins in 2012. Sadly, at 14 and 15 weeks, we lost both our babies due to cervical incompetence.

We were told of this marvellous medical procedure called an 'Abdominal Cerclage' which would hold the cervix closed and allow us to carry a baby to full term. So in February 2013, I underwent this procedure.

In August 2013 we again received the joyous news that we were expecting! Albeit a bit cautious, we had a lot of faith in my 'wonder stitch' and so dreamed of our future with our precious little boy.

However, everything went horribly wrong, when at our 19 week morphology scan we saw my cervix wide open and Ashley's amniotic sack bulging through. My waters broke that night.

After having contractions, we were certain we were going to lose our little boy then and there... but we didn't, he held on and we were blessed with hearing his beautiful little heart beat (pretty much every hour for the first 24 hours... sorry about that midwives!)

Three days later we had an ultrasound to see our boy, only to find out that one of his legs had got 'caught' in my cervix during the water breaking/contractions episode.

But still he hung in there, for 4 weeks in fact with no amniotic fluid and no ability to really move. Each day was a blessing and made us realise what a little fighter he was.

Sadly, on the 4th January, 2014, he lost his fight after his leg became infected and I went into labour.

He lived for 23 minutes and died with his daddy holding him closely. We made it to 23 weeks + 1 day, just shy of our goal of 24 weeks.

In the days following his death, we were able to use the 'Cold Cuddle Cot' that the Mater had available, but had to share it with 3 other families. Every minute we had to spend with him was precious and our only opportunity to truly be parents to Ashley.

I have spoken to so many bereaved mothers who never had the opportunity to use a cuddle cot after the loss of their babies. We don't want any newly bereaved parents to miss out on such an experience.

So please, give if you can or share his story with bosses, colleagues, friends and family. That way, we will be able to purchase one of these desperately needed machines for newly bereaved families.

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts!

Nathan and Selena Wool