

# Tracy's Story of Paul



family, and the doctor around me. The nurses confirmed that my water broke and I needed to be sent to a hospital with the right equipment for my baby, and preparations for an ambulance were made. My contractions were getting worse by the minute and the doctor was saying that they had to act fast. Within an hour I was carried out and ready to be shipped to Regina. There, Dustin would meet me and his family while my mom came with me in the ambulance. I remember pain and more pain, probably because I had back labor and I was told that's the worst.

My name is Terra Alblas. I am a first time mom at the age of twenty, and I have a premature baby. He was born on December 18, 2004 at 12:17 pm, at the Regina General Hospital, Regina Saskatchewan. My son Paul weighed 2 pounds and 6 ounces at birth, and here's our story.

On December 17 2004, in Yorkton Saskatchewan, I woke up to back pain and a little spotting (I was only 6 months along in my pregnancy). I told my boyfriend's mother and she told me to go the hospital, because you can never be too sure. So I went, and found out that I was having contractions. The doctor kept me in for evaluation because my son was not due for another 3 months. He put me in a room with a lady I know, who was also having complications with her pregnancy, but this was her third child and she knew more than I did and what to expect.

Later that night, I forget the time, but as I was getting up to go walk around I felt a gush of water like substance. So I say to Tracy in a panicked voice "Tracy I am peeing and I can't stop!" She told me to call the nurse but I couldn't reach my call button. So Tracy got the nurse and called my family and Dustin's (my boyfriend) family. Within minutes I had nurses,

When I arrived at Regina I was put into a room and had everyone crowded around me again. I just kept saying to my mom, "Will my baby be ok I don't want my baby to die and make the pain stop!" The emergency team in Regina had tubes and wires all over me, and beeping noises everywhere. When the doctor couldn't find my son's heart beat I was scared! I grasped Dustin's hand so hard that he was flinching from the pain I was inflicting on him. I just lay there, sucking in all the pain just to hear my son's heart, and when it finally was found a sigh of relief came from everyone. A stream of tears came from my eyes. The doctors said that if he was going to come they would try to delay his appearance, so they gave me steroids because the doctors said he might have a problem with his lungs. The staff said that they would try to give Paul an extra 2 to 3 weeks in the womb so he would have a fighting chance. They also gave me something to stop the contractions and boy did it work! Well, I was given a room and was told that I would have to stay put until my baby came!

Everyone left me during the night because everything was perfectly fine so they all went home. After I woke up from what seemed to be a nightmare, around 9a.m. I phoned everyone to tell them I wished them a Merry

Christmas, and that I was perfectly fine! At around 11:00 AM I had to go to the bathroom, so I get into the bathroom do my business and I hear something splash in the water. So I look and there is the biggest blood clot I have ever seen I called the nurse and by then I am bleeding even more. Within the half hour I am in the room before the O.R., and they are checking my son's heart. The nursing staff told me that if they don't operate there is the chance that I might lose the baby or I might not make it. The only request I had was to phone Dustin and get him over here fast!

By then I was so scared! Right before they prepped me for the emergency C-section the nurse came in and said Dustin was on his way! At 12:17 p.m.

my son Paul was born weighing a total of 2 pounds and 6 ounces, and was not even 12 inches long. When I heard my boy cry for the first time, I didn't know whether to cry or smile. And then I saw his little frail body, a combination of purple and red. He was so small and I was too afraid to even touch him. I guess the one thing that scared me the most was when the doctor told me that he had to go back into the incubator because he was losing his body heat!

In recovery Dustin came in and held my hand. I looked at him and started to cry. I told him we have a baby boy, and he was in the Neo-Natal Unit. Dustin only left my side for a moment to go see our son and was back within 15 minutes. When I was able to go see Paul, all I saw was a bunch of wires, and tubes and the tiniest baby I have ever seen. It was scary and reality was just setting in, I didn't know what to do or to think. Seeing Paul lay there just scared me half to death. I would think what did I do wrong? When I look back I feel ashamed for the way I acted, but nobody knows how things are going to affect them until it comes knocking on your door.

For three months I saw other babies pass on, or go to bigger cities by airplane, or have open heart surgery and that made me realize that there were worse things that can happen. I barely saw my son. I had been neglecting him.

Why, because I didn't want to see him in the NICU. I always thought that as soon as a baby was born it would come home right away. After Paul came home, I didn't know what to make of it all. I woke up with him at night but that mother and baby bond was missing. I did not feel attached to him. I was constantly handing Paul off to anyone and everyone who was interested in holding him.



One day, I saw that Paul just didn't really want to be around me, and fussed every time he was. That was when I realized I needed to change. Now, after 7 months of him being around we are inseparable. Paul is my life, and I look at him as if he is a miracle, because he is! He fought against all the odds and now he is over 15 pounds. That

little boy was meant to be and I truly regret the way I had acted when he was born.

I didn't know what to expect and how to act. Watching your child fight for his life makes you reconsider yours! In all reality I think I have changed for the better. Paul has touched many hearts. This little boy means so much to me; I don't know what I would do without him!

Many people will not understand this unless they have possibly gone through the same thing I did. I can not explain how I felt in more depth because it is so hard to understand myself! I felt that if I didn't get close to him, I wouldn't have to worry about getting too attached, and if I lost him it wouldn't hurt as much! I can't understand why I thought that way, but it's the truth. It hurts just thinking about how I tried to protect myself! I don't know, but I think that there are probably other mothers like me, and just saying how it actually affected you and the truth don't always go hand in hand! Some other parents with the same feelings may not speak up, because I know I didn't- I felt ashamed, but now I am glad I have shared my story with you and I hope that it will help other mothers feel less alone and less afraid. Thank you for listening to my story. It feels good to get it out!

*Tracy*