

ALEXANDRIA MARY GOLDMAN

Born at **24 weeks** 8/7/09

Due Date 26/10/09

Weight 598grams

Our miracle baby's story began on the 4/7/09 when my waters broke spontaneously.

Although I was booked at another hospital, they couldn't look after babies born that premature, so I was lucky enough to find room at the Inn- Royal North Shore, I guess LUCKY being the operative word, as I only lasted 2 days before going into an intense and very quick labour.

Alexandria was born breech, at 3.11pm, weighing only 598gms, Length 29cm. As you all know no guarantees can be given to the parents of 24 week old babies-extreme prematurity.

Lucky again, she was born well, infact, pink was the word I heard after having her, not only because she is a girl either!

Within 48hours, she was on CPAP, I'm sure those of you reading this would know how good this is! All was going as well as possible....UNTIL....the early hours of 13th July, Alexandria developed Ileal perforation secondary to NEC- she had a perforated bowl- this was life threatening to say the least.

"The honeymoon period is over", the doctor said to me, "this doesn't look good", she added. I was told to be prepared for anything." She will need surgery urgently, if they (Westmead children's hospital) agree she can cope with surgery.

The people that played an important part of Alexandria's life are NETS...Neonatal Emergency Transport Services. These are the people I will be eternally grateful for (including surgeons, doctors and nurses).

NETS arrived, and couldn't promise Alexandria will survive the trip from RNS to the Children's hospital.

But she did! She had surgery on 13/7/09. Surgeons operated on her at 25weeks age-AMAZING. Words will never describe the pain we felt whilst our princess was in theatre.

The operation however was a success. She then had an eliotomy bag on her stomach. During our stay at Westmead children's hospital NICU (Neonatal Intensive Care Unit), it was touch and go for about 5 and half weeks. Whilst we were there, Alexandria needed another operation PDA ligation-clip her heart duct closed. Another major operation at 26 weeks-only.

Again I can't thank the surgeons enough. We will never forget you all.

Still heavily ventilated, she started to tolerate feeds, and her bowel started to work, we were then transferred back to RNS to continue growth. NETS delivered her safely back, Alexandria made GREAT progress.

Now we needed to slowly extubate her. A course of steroids were given, and worked.

By the end of August she was on low flow and had graduated from NICU to High Dependency-things were looking good. Mum and

Dad were feeling a sigh of relief, and mum was spreading the wonderful news.

But only 3 weeks later to find out Alexandria needed eye laser surgery-ROP..Retinopathy of Prematurity.

Yes, Alexandria needed to be re intubated and had the surgery at RNS 19/9/09- 2000 zaps in EACH eye!

Well, she proved to be a fighter once again, as this was another success. All checks were cleared. Although back in NICU for one night, she was extubated and back on low flow, and in high dependency unit.

Our baby surprised her mummy because on mum's birthday..1/10 she was miraculously off all respiratory support- she no longer had lung disease.

One more operation was still needed, but she must weigh 2kgs in order for the surgeons to operate.

When she moved to special care- another milestone- still in a crib- the doctors and nurses did a marvelous job "fattening her".

On the 3/11 the surgery was performed to re connect her bowl. Another major operation, but a success.

Alexandria finally came home on 11/11, without oxygen, no feeding tube. Head scans all clear, hearing all good.

All in all,

Perforated bowel- operation required

Patent Ductus Arteriosus - PDA ligation- operation required

Respiratory support for 6 weeks

Caffeine for prevention of Apnoea

Anemia- Blood transfusions- received 5 in total

ROP- Retinopathy Of Prematurity- eye laser surgery required

Closure of bowel- operation required

Alexandria's life has been a blessing. We feel very lucky to have her. Although many tears were shed, heartache and pain was every part of this journey. It was all worth it. She has been worth it.

Our only advice is to always stay POSITIVE. Very hard, but the outcome is worth it.

GOD bless all the babies...