

My name is Shona and I live in Johannesburg. Having PCOS I was first of all faced with infertility. Once we conquered that little obstacle and I was finally pregnant, we thought that things would be plain sailing. At 18w4d I went for a regular checkup, only to be told that I was 2.5cm dilated and my cervix was 1.5cm in length. I was diagnosed with Incompetent Cervix and admitted to the Parklane Clinic to have a cerclage placed. I was told there was a 50/50 chance of it being successful as they could nick the bad and break my waters. Thankfully it was successful and I was placed on full bedrest with just toilet visits and once a week to the OB. We had numerous scares and I spent time on and off in hospital. At 27w6d I PROMed and was readmitted. Unfortunately infection started setting in, and I had to deliver. Caitlyn Alaina was born naturally (forceps aided) on the 22nd March 2000 weighing 1.08kg and 35cm in length. Her gestational age was 28w3d, and her APGARS were 9 and 9. We had 4 steroid shots from 26w which I think made a huge difference to her lungs. She needed supplemental O2 via a headbox for a few days. Started at 42% O2 the night she was born. 3 days later she was off it, but developed jaundice and went back in the headbox for a further 2 days. At 1 week of age she was moved into an incubator. At 4.5w of age she was weighing 1.7kg and was moved into an open cot, but looked very lethargic and was having large aspirates, so her pedi was called in. Caitlyn had developed NEC. She was taken off feeds, moved back to the NICU, and for 3 nights was listed as critical. Thankfully no perforations occurred and 10 days later she was started on feeds again. She came home at exactly 7w of age weighing just over 2kg. 3 days later she was readmitted due to severe vomiting and stomach distention. She had developed strictures in the bowel as a result of the NEC. She was operated on on Mothers day 2000 and a bowel resection was done. She came home finally at exactly 2 months of age. At 5 months of age, she was once again readmitted for vomiting bile and a distended stomach. This time it was adhesions on her intestines as a result of the first operation. Thankfully a relatively small operation, and 7 days later she was home. At 10mos actual she was still not bearing weight on her legs but was sitting on her own very well, so we were sent to a Physiotherapist. Her gross motor skills were assessed as being on a 3-5mo old level. 5mos later she was caught up.

She is now nearly 25months old and the light of my life. She is still tiny, just on 10kg, but has a mouth big enough for a child a lot bigger LOL. She was considered developmentally caught up in all areas at 15mo actual. She started walking the beginning of June last year which put her at nearly 12mos adjusted, 14.5mos actual. Her speech to me was slow, but she fell on the normal line at 18mos, however from around 22mos it has just taken off. She is now putting 3-4 words together and becoming a real chatterbox.