

James Michael Birth Plan

Sadly, our beloved baby, JAMES has been diagnosed with DOWNS SYNDROME, SEVERE HYDROPS, LUNG & HEART PROBLEMS AND HYGROMA. However imperfect he appears, this is our child whom we love deeply. This love compels us to revere and treasure every moment of our baby's life to its fullest natural extent. Your compassion and understanding during this bittersweet and difficult time are appreciated.

We believe that the memories of our actions during this sacred time with JAMES will console us. We understand that after birth situations may arise that were not anticipated and decisions will need to be made. We simply ask you to keep us informed so we can participate in the decisions about what is best for JAMES. We ask that no intervention be taken without our approval, other than what is outlined below.

We have named our baby JAMES. Please call him by that name when referring to him. Ask us how we feel, if he has been active, and what special stories we have from the pregnancy. This validates and honors our baby's life.

PREFERENCES DURING LABOR:

- KATELYN would like to have a vaginal delivery unless the doctors feel it is medically necessary to have a cesarean section for her wellbeing
- Any drugs given during labor to KATELYN should be given in doses to provide maximum comfort while allowing her to remain alert.
- KATELYN will request an epidural to help minimize pain and discomfort during labor when she's ready unless the doctor advises otherwise
- Please allow MICHAEL to cut the umbilical cord.
- During labor and delivery we do NOT want constant heart monitoring of baby JAMES. However, we would like for him to be checked periodically.
- JILL POWERS will be taking pictures during the final stages of the birth process and afterwards.
- MICHAEL will let her know when it's time to come back to the delivery room. (She is a close friend)

PREFERENCES AFTER DELIVERY:

- Please inform us immediately after birth if baby JAMES is alive or stillborn.
- **If born alive:**
 - Please DO NOT ATTEMPT to initiate breathing using a breathing tube.
 - We would like oral/nasal suctioning for JAMES' comfort only
 - After delivery, we would like baby JAMES to be handed to KATELYN.
 - We want baby JAMES to be with us and not placed in a warmer. Instead, we would like to use warm blankets and/or skin-to-skin contact against parent's chest.
 - Please delay all procedures (weigh, measure, footprints) until both parents have held baby JAMES. When possible, these procedures should be done while the parents are present or holding him/her. We would prefer that baby JAMES not be taken out of the room.
 - If our baby has fewer problems than expected, please discuss all options with us. Other than routine post-delivery care, we wish for private time with our baby.
 - We would like for baby JAMES to be bathed by us.
 - We prefer comfort care for baby JAMES (no IV's or extra measures to extend life)
 - We do not need a hospital chaplain to visit after the baby's birth.
 - We would like family/friends to visit us during this time including our daughter EVERLY (EVY). We prefer that MICHAEL will notify the family when JAMES has arrived, his current state and then bring EVY back to meet her brother.
 - It's important to have FAMILY PICTURES of the three of us taken first before our immediate family comes back to visit.
 - We have a videographer that will join Jill when Evy comes in to meet her brother. There will be less videography than photography but this is very important to us.
 - If KATELYN needs to have a DNC for problems with the placenta and JAMES is still alive, we wish to wait on that procedure as long as it's safe for Katelyn. Katelyn doesn't want to not be with him when he passes.
- **If stillborn or passes away shortly after birth:**
 - After delivery, we would like baby JAMES to be handed to KATELYN.
 - We would like photographs of our baby which will be done by JILL POWERS
 - We would like handprints and footprints of baby JAMES.
 - We would like molds made of handprints and footprints of baby JAMES (TWO SETS - we will be bringing these mold kits)
 - We would like to stay with our baby after death

- We would like a cooling cot if possible to lengthen the time we are able to have with him
- We would like for baby JAMES to be bathed by us.
- We do not need a hospital chaplain to visit after the baby's birth.
- We would like family/friends to visit us during this time including our daughter EVERLY (EVY). We prefer that MICHAEL will notify the family when JAMES has arrived, his current state and then bring EVY back to meet her brother.
- It's important to have FAMILY PICTURES of the three of us taken first before our immediate family comes back to visit.
- Funeral home arrangements have been made. We wish to be the ones to hand our baby to the funeral home.
- We wish to hold our baby as she/he is dying or has died and want to keep his/her precious body with us as long as possible.
- We have an outfit for JAMES and would like to dress him.
- Please give KATELYN instructions on comfort measures/milk suppression.
- We have a photographer to take pictures of our little one. However, the nurses may feel free to take photos as well.
- We have a videographer that will join Jill when Evy comes in to meet her brother. There will be less videography than photography but this is very important to us.

We would like the following items as keepsakes:

lock of hair (if possible) crib card ID bracelet

weight card hand and foot prints (and molds) hat/blanket/clothes

Pictures for Jill to take:

- Some of the birth/us first seeing him and holding him chest to chest after delivery (like Evy's birth.... It's ok to shoot if we're really upset)
- Picture of him naked (without a hat... this may be hard but we'll probably want to have this down the road)
- His feet and hands... we can hold them to make this easier
- Just Katelyn and James
- Just Michael and James
- Michael, Katelyn, Evy and James (us all smiling at the camera... if Evy cooperates)
- Michael, Katelyn, Evy looking down at James
- Close up of us holding this hand
- A picture with both sides of the family

** Obviously this is not like Evy's birth....but I think we want to treat it as much like hers as we can picture wise. Anything you get will be great. Don't feel like it's weird or rude or not appropriate to take pictures of tears or how sad it will be. It's going to be sad... but hopefully also very peaceful and joyful no matter what happens.**

PLAN FOR PHOTOGRAPHY WITH COMPLICATIONS:

- If Katelyn has to be taken to the OR to finish delivery, Jill can wait with Michael until that process is over and we have time to hold James in a regular room. I don't think anyone could even be in the OR.
- If Katelyn has to have a DNC, Jill can take pictures of James with Michael and Evy while Katelyn is in Surgery. (If it's possible, I really don't want to not be present when other people see James. I'm praying this won't be a thing!) However, if the surgery is going to take hours and James' body starts to change and it would be best for the family to see him while I'm not present, it's ok.
- If delivery doesn't go smoothly and Jill is in the room, it's ok. You can just pray:)

Video requests if possible:

- Capturing Evy coming in to meet him. If it's really late and she's fussy, we'll just be flexible! She may fuss or she may point at him and want to touch him. Anything is great.
- Slow motion of us holding his hands
- Michael and I holding him/kissing him

** I'm really not picky about this... I'm just trying not to have any regrets down the road. Just a few clips is really fine. We don't need anything actual delivery. That is going to be really technical and hard since he's breech. Don't feel like you need to film anything in the waiting room. Really just having a few clips of us holding him is all I want... and you don't have to see his face. We won't know how much of him we'll show until he gets here. **