

Identical Quadruplets – a rare case

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Quadruplets are a set of four offsprings born at one birth. It can be multizygotic or monozygotic. Multizygotic quadruplets occur from fertilization of four different sets of ovum and sperm. Monozygotic multiples are the result of a fertilized egg that splits into two or more embryos. Multizygotic quadruplets can be all male, all female, or a combination of both while monozygotic quadruplets will always be of the same gender.

Here, I present a case of quadruplets born in my hospital, Udhna Hospital Pvt. Ltd. On 31st October, 1990

Quadruplets is a rare phenomenon. Incidence is about 0.000142% or once in 70 lakh births. There are less than 4000 such cases reported worldwide.

The average gestation for a quadruplet pregnancy is 19-31 weeks, as opposed to 40 weeks for a full-term baby. One-quarter of mothers will require cervical cerclage, a surgical procedure in which the cervix is sewn shut to prevent preterm labor.

There are about 3500 sets of quadruplets worldwide; only 60 or so are identical or monozygotic. Parents of quadruplets will change close to 30,000 diapers before their kids are potty trained.

My patient named Kamlaben Shankarbai Prajapati, aged 32 years had a girl of 7 years as a first child. She came to me as she wanted a second child and was not able to conceive.

After routine investigations she conceived spontaneously. She was diagnosed with 6 weeks pregnancy. Then she went to her native place and again came to me when she was 5 months pregnant. Triplets were diagnosed with a basic ultrasound machine available in 1990 at that time. Her Routine investigations were normal. She was not diabetic. Folic Acid, B12, Iron, Calcium and Protein supplements were given. She had an undue enlargement of abdomen with increasing weeks of pregnancy. She had abdominal discomfort to such an extent that I admitted her when she was 28th week pregnant. She had no antenatal complications. She remained admitted for one & half months. At 34 weeks she developed labour pains, was shifted to labour room, where she delivered normally (vaginally) one by one. We were expecting triplets. We got a big surprise when the fourth baby was also delivered. Paediatrician was called at the time of delivery. The babies were resuscitated and were shifted to Neonatal Intensive care unit.

The delivery was premature and process took about 1 and half hour. And the mother's condition was fine and healthy. All four babies were boys weighing (1.5kg, 1.35kg, 1.40kg, 1.30 kg). There were no congenital defects. They were kept in neonatal ICU for

about 1 month. Now they are healthy & married 28 years old men. This was a moment we could never forget.

We were overjoyed and proud of the fact that with proper care, our patient had a normal delivery of four healthy babies (boys) without any complications to mother or babies, in an era where diagnostic tools and methods were very primitive.

Most quadruplet pregnancies result in a caesarean delivery, less than 3% of quadruplets are delivered vaginally. The average birth weight of a quadruplet is about 3 ¼ pounds, and most quadruplets received medical care in a hospital NICU.

Multifetal gestation comprises a high risk pregnancy and proper antenatal and intrapartum care results in a successful maternal and fetal outcome as seen in our case.