

My pregnancy has been a lot like a roller-coaster ride since I found in June this year that I was expecting twins. We have twins on both sides of our family. My firstborn is a boy, Michael Ethan, who is now 2 years 9 months old.

In July, when we went to the UK to visit my in-laws, I had a threatened miscarriage. When I did a viability scan at a hospital in UK, the consultant stared for ages at the screen, and finally said "Your twins are fine, but I have news for you ... there's a third heartbeat! You're actually expecting triplets!"

My husband turned pale and didn't hear half of what the doctor said. I exclaimed in disbelief, "I can't be!"

The doctor explained that the third baby could have been conceived a couple of days after the first two babies, as it is possible for several eggs to be released in the reproductive cycle, especially when one gets older.

We returned to Singapore a month later and did another scan. This time, the news was not so good. There appeared to be a growth behind the head and back of the third baby, and the doctor revealed that there was a high possibility of it having some congenital defect. I was offered a diagnostic test called CVS, where a sample of the baby's placenta would be taken for testing. But we declined as it posed a risk to the pregnancy. Furthermore, we believe that every baby is a blessing from God and only He could take our baby back.

We sought a second opinion from another doctor, who also confirmed the diagnosis. The 'bubble' behind our baby had grown. A week later, we went for another scan. There, the doctor said that the baby's heart had already stopped beating. We stared at the monitor for what seemed like ages for any signs of life, but there was none.

That was my eleventh week of pregnancy and we could clearly see our baby's head and limbs. We decided to name our baby "René(e)" meaning "born again" in French as it was a name suitable for both a girl and boy, since it was too soon to tell the sex of the baby. We also offered a Mass (we're Catholic) for the peaceful repose of the soul of our baby, and it was great to actually hear René(e)'s name read out in church as it made his/her short existence even more real.

We have since found out that we're having a girl and a boy. Oh what joy! From the last scan I had, they both appear to be growing well and are in the 50th percentile. I am now 20 weeks pregnant and considering that I am carrying more than one baby, I am feeling surprisingly fine. Even my doctors were amazed that I haven't experienced any nausea, vomiting, food cravings or mood swings! I didn't have any such symptoms during my first pregnancy either. The biggest difference between my two pregnancies is that I've been "showing" much earlier - I looked pregnant at two and a half months as compared to four and a half months! I feel more tired than before and have experienced more muscle aches, so I've decided to treat myself to a pre-natal massage once a week. This is a luxury I didn't have during my first pregnancy!

For now, we pray that the rest of the pregnancy will proceed smoothly and that I will be able to carry the twins till at least week 37 and that they will be born healthy enough not to have to be in NICU. ●

