

## Information for Parents of Triplets, Quads or More!

Finding out you are expecting a baby can evoke many contradicting emotions of joy and excitement, switching to panic and fear. Your life is about to change as you know it. If you are one of the few families who find out they are expecting triplets, quads or even more, then these feelings may be quite overwhelming! Don't worry this is a normal reaction to a very special and unusual situation.

### To give you some idea how unique your situation is, here are some statistics on UK births based on the most recent 2013 data:

In total there were 770,502 births in the UK in 2013. Of these 11,980 were twins (1.6%). The incidence of triplet births was only 204. That's just 0.03% of all births that year!! The incidence of quads or more was even less, with only three sets born in the entire country.

Tamba asked parents of triplets (or more) about their experiences in the hope of passing on some of their valuable first-hand experience and information to other families who are just embarking on the incredible journey themselves.

### TOP TIPS FOR PARENTS OF TRIPLETS, QUADS OR MORE!

#### Tip 1 - Information and Preparation.

In the 2015 Tamba survey of triplet and quad parents, the respondents emphasised how important it is to gather as much information as you can, to help you prepare for this life changing event.

Often a worry during pregnancy for parents of higher order multiples is not only the health and wellbeing of the babies, but the mothers' health too. A triplet or quad pregnancy is considered a 'high risk pregnancy'.

The team of health professionals involved in your care will be monitoring



your pregnancy closely, and so you can expect to have lots more scans and appointments with the specialist team than a mum expecting a single baby.

It may help you to stay more calm and relaxed if you write down any questions you want to ask and take this with you to your appointment. This can help you feel more informed about your care during your pregnancy and afterwards.

If you register on the Tamba website you can download for free Tamba's [Healthy Multiple Pregnancy Guide](#). This is packed full of useful and important information about multiple birth pregnancies that can help support you throughout your pregnancy.

**When we surveyed parents of triplets or more, 63% said their babies were born between 32-37 weeks gestation.**

Many of the parents we asked, recommended you ask for a visit to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) and Special Care Baby Unit (SCBU) prior to having your babies. One recent mother of triplets said:

**“ Have a tour of neonatal in advance if you can as you are very likely to be there for some time with higher order multiples. It's a tough time and we found it easier knowing what we were going to be faced with.”**

**91% of parents surveyed said that their babies needed to spend some time in a neonatal unit (although for many this time was limited).**

Ask lots of questions whilst you are there. It is more likely than with a singleton or twins that your triplets or quads will need to spend some time in special care. Parents have told us they would have found their time in special care easier to cope with, and less of a shock, if they had already known a bit about what to expect. Download [Tamba's Neonatal Guide](#) to read more about multiples and special care.

Some hospitals offer special ante-natal classes for parents expecting multiples, so it's worth asking your unit what they offer.

**86% of parents of triplets or more had friends or family go with them to ante-natal appointments.**

Tamba have a variety of courses specifically for parents of multiples. The most popular course is the Practical Preparing for Parenthood seminar, which is delivered by trained volunteers who are all parents of multiples themselves. Not only can they provide you with more valuable information, but it is a good place to meet other families who are also expecting multiples.

Asking to be put in touch specifically with other triplet and quad families, via your midwife or consultant, Tamba, Multiple Births Club or online, may lead to valuable sources of support for the future. One of the best ways to get a true insight into what life might be like, is from some of the people who already know!

### Tip 2 - Rest and Relaxation.

Prior to the birth, many mums (over 11%) said that they wished they had taken the time to rest a lot more, before their babies arrived. It is important to conserve your energy, as a higher order multiple pregnancy is very demanding on your body and it is important to get plenty of rest.

One recent parent of triplets said:

**“Don't try to do too much, it is exhausting, and you need to put yourself and the babies first.”**

The advice was not much different after the birth, except a little less easy to do! In fact a huge 62.4% of the parents we asked said that lack of sleep/tiredness was what they found hardest to cope with.

Sleep when the babies sleep, or whenever else you get the chance! Don't forget to work as a team. Take a look at these couples' clever solutions:

**“Keep a firm routine and have one person do the bedtime feed and a different person to do the early morning feed to maximise sleep.”**

**“DO IT IN SHIFTS - my husband and I cared for the children at different times of the day, very rarely together so we would each get a few hours uninterrupted sleep a day.”**

**“Babies are hard work. Three babies are really hard work! Splitting the night into shifts with your partner so that you both get some uninterrupted sleep can help. Put earplugs in during your sleep shift and sleep; trust your partner to cope.”**

To help with feeding all their babies some mothers will express their breast milk so that others can help.

To find out more about breast feeding multiples and expressing you can sign up to one of our [Breast Feeding Webinars](#) and listen from the comfort of your own home to get top tips and answers to FAQs. Tamba also has a team of [Breast Feeding Peer Supporters](#) can help support mums after the birth and a [Breastfeeding Guide](#) which can be downloaded from the Tamba website.

### The survey asked about help that parents had received after the birth:

**84**

PERCENT

84% of parents with triplets or more had help caring for their babies from family.

48% had help from family with housework.

**48**

PERCENT

**39**

PERCENT

39% of survey respondents received help from Home Start.

**35**

PERCENT

35% had help caring for their babies from friends.

**15**

PERCENT

15% had help with housework from friends.

(Parents could choose more than one answer)

### Tip 3 - Routine and Organisation.

Once your babies make their arrival into the world, you have to figure out how to approach the care of three (or more) newborn babies all at once.

The most frequently mentioned tip (almost 30%), was how important it is to have a routine in place and also try to be organised. Many higher order multiples are born prematurely and require a stay in hospital after birth. Many hospitals encouraged parents to help with the babies care as much as their situation allows. A repeatedly mentioned tip was to take advantage of this time, for establishing a routine, and to try to take this routine home with you.

The key is to find a routine that works for you and your babies and it can take a while for this to establish (so be patient and try not to be too hard on yourself).

Parents of triplets, quads or more who responded to our survey said:

**“Time in NICU is VERY helpful for establishing a routine for your babies - even if it's not as cosy as you might have imagined your babies' arrival in the world to be.”**

**“Be organised and stick to a routine! Whiteboards are amazing and help other people understand the routine. They are useful to note who was fed, how much and whether they have had a wet or dirty nappy as it's easy to forget. And in case of sickness it might be needed to advise a health professional.”**

**“Tomorrow's another day - so if you have a bad day with your routine etc, don't worry - you can make a fresh start tomorrow.”**

### Tip 4 - Asking for Help.

Having three (or more) babies all at once will be a challenge and any help that you can get is a bonus.

Asking for help is a key to coping effectively and was a top tip given by nearly a quarter of the parents we asked.

For many it can be hard to ask for help but asking for help is a sign of strength and many people will feel pleased that you have asked.

Getting good help and support in place is essential both before the babies

arrive and afterwards. Tips from parents of triplets and quads are:

“Accept help. I always felt bad when someone offered to do something for me. People will only offer so many times. I just wish that I would have let them.”

“Don't be afraid to ask for help and accept it. I was too proud initially and made it much harder than it needed to be.”

The help you receive may be practical help with the babies, or it might be financial advice, emotional support, or physical help around the house.

Be specific about what you would like help with. Some people may want to help cuddle and feed a tiny newborn, but help with the washing, housework, a meal to put in the freezer or lifts to and from hospital might be more useful!

Remember that some people may feel nervous about helping especially with looking after newborn babies.

“Ask for help from family, friends and neighbours, but be specific about what help you need. For example, a neighbour could do a load of laundry at their house or a friend could cook a meal.”

#### Tip 5 - Look After Your Relationship and Each Other.

Another key tip from respondents to our survey is to look after your relationship with your partner. Work as a team and support each other as it will be a challenging time. It is vital to look after your relationship as well as caring for your babies.

Try to realise that being sleep-deprived is difficult for both of you and can lead to tension or a feeling of being overloaded and overwhelmed. Finding some time for each other can help. For example, doing something simple like sharing a hot drink before the next feed is due, or when you

47% of survey respondents had help with night-times including night feeds.

are apart, send a message to let the other know you are still thinking of them. Most of all acknowledge and tackle problems together.

These parents suggest:

“Work together and support each other. Regardless of how tired and irritable you get.”

“Talk to each other and acknowledge each other's fears and feelings. Do not ignore any issues between you. Seek help through relate or other counselling early.”

#### Tip 6 - Support Network and Groups.

Online support via social media can be very beneficial. For example, the Tamba Triplet Facebook page and also the 'UK Triplet and Quad Mummies' Facebook group.

Parents in the survey also said how valuable it was to meet other parents of triplets or more, for example, at your local Twins and Multiple Births Club. A list of local clubs can be found [here](#).

Try and attend some groups whilst you are pregnant to start building a network.

One parent of triplets said:

“Having the support of other triplet / quad mums on the Facebook group was invaluable. Knowing other mums were going through the same as me and that there were others who had gone through it and come out the other side, gave me hope!”

Once your babies arrive, getting out the house is important for you all, but don't feel pressured to do so until you feel ready. The important thing is not to get stuck in a rut of feeling overwhelmed and staying indoors because it feels easier. This can make you feel even more isolated.

If you are struggling with the logistics of getting out, because you need more pairs of hands to help, then be sure to ask a friend or contact [Home Start](#), which is a charity that provides hands-on support to families with children under the age of five.

If you are struggling financially with buying a buggy, be sure to ask at your

local children and families centre if there are any local charities that can help.

Many of our families use a combination of baby slings and double or single buggies to make getting out and about easier when there are two adults available.

For families in severe difficulties you can apply to our [Helping Hands](#) scheme to see if you are eligible for some support.

### Parents of triplets or more were asked what they used to take their babies out and about:

76% used a triple buggy or quad buggy.

76  
PERCENT

46  
PERCENT

A double buggy with a single buggy was used by 46%.

36% used a double buggy and a sling.

36  
PERCENT

(Parents could choose more than one answer as families sometimes vary the buggies they use)

#### Tip 7 - Don't make comparisons.

Nearly 12% of triplet mums mention how important it is to not compare yourself and your family to other mums and families. In time you will work out what works best for you and your family.

Parents in our survey say:

“Remember you have a very special situation and people may comment and try giving you advice on how they did things, but they haven't had to bring up three or more babies at the same time and so cannot really comment. You will be doing a great job.”

“Take the advice that you think is useful or helpful and ignore what you think is not.”

“No-one can imagine coping with triplets, so everything you ever do will astound everyone.”



### Tip 8 - Practical Tips.

The parents we spoke to also came up with a huge amount of practical tips and tricks! Here are the most popular and a few of our favourites!

“Colour-code everything, from bottles to dummies and even the triplets!”

“Online shopping is essential. Start whilst pregnant so you can set up shopping lists.”

“Minimise your most used rooms of clutter to make it easier to keep clean and organised as when the babies come you need to do the bare minimal.”

“Buy a tumble dryer if you can. Not having clothes hanging everywhere, all the time, kept my head clear and made me feel less stressed.”

Do also refer to the [Tamba Practical Preparing for Parenthood Guide](#) for more useful tips.

### Tip 9 - They don't stay small for long.

Half of parents in our survey took the view that they wished they had spent more time just enjoying the babies whilst they were small, as they were so busy and it rushed past too quickly.

“Do make time for cuddles when they are babies. Looking back, I spent so much time just washing, feeding etc and I wish I had spent more time just being with them, as it goes past so quickly.”

“They get easier as they get older. Try to enjoy it as you're so busy that the baby days are over in a flash.”

Others take the position of, 'don't worry,' it doesn't last for long! Even though those first few weeks and months are difficult, try to look forward to a time when nappies, bottles and sleeping routines are no longer an issue.

“Don't worry, it doesn't last forever. Don't panic, and let them lead the way and go with the flow.”

“It will not be as bad as you imagine. Sing a lot. A sense of humour is advised!”



### Tip 10 - Stay Positive.

A positive mind-set can make a huge difference to how well you can cope:

“RELAX - nothing will be as you expect nor want. But enjoy!”

“Don't expect too much. The early days are very hard and exhausting. If everyone is fed and clean you are doing an amazing job!”

“You are stronger than you know and will find patience you didn't know you had... and love in a way you didn't know was possible!”

## LINKS TO OTHER SUPPORTIVE CHARITIES

### Working Families

The UK's leading charity helping families with work life balance.

[www.workingfamilies.org.uk](http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk)

### cry-sis

A national charity that provides advice and support to families with crying, sleepless or demanding babies. The national helpline number is 0845 1228669, open 365 days a year, 9am - 10pm.

[www.cry-sis.org.uk](http://www.cry-sis.org.uk)

### Bliss

Bliss is the UK charity working to provide the best possible care and support for all premature and sick babies. They offer a wide range of free and confidential private advice and information for the families of babies born 'too soon, too small or too sick'. Services include a helpline, counselling, a message board and help in your local area.

[www.bliss.org.uk](http://www.bliss.org.uk)

### Home Start

Home-Start is a national family support charity that helps parents with young children to build better lives for their children. Their volunteers provide support and friendship to more than 29,170 families every year through over 288 local Home-Starts. They work in communities across the UK and with families on British Forces bases in Germany and Cyprus. Some areas of the country may not be covered by Home-Start so please check their website:

[www.home-start.org.uk/findsupport/search](http://www.home-start.org.uk/findsupport/search)

Thank you for downloading our factsheet. Feedback from our user community is very important to Tamba. Please complete this survey to help us continue to ensure we meet the needs of our community:  
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Tambafactsheetfeedback>

## FAQs for Parents of Triplets, Quads or More!

Answers to frequent questions asked by parents of triplets, quads or more. You should also read Tamba's [Triplets, Quads or More! factsheet](#) and [case stories](#) that we produced along with these FAQs.

### FAQ 1 - How will I cope with the financial strain?

Raising three or more children, especially all at once, will always be expensive. Members of Tamba can benefit from discounts in a variety of high street and specialist shops. There may also be some support available from the government if you are in receipt of certain benefits and you may be eligible for the Sure Start Maternity Grant.

Turn2us has an [online benefits calculator](#) which is very useful to help you see if you are entitled to any benefits.

For advice on paternity and maternity leave you can call [Working Families](#) on 0300 0120312.

To help you save money, some parents of triplets had the following advice:

“Don't stress about buying too many things. New born babies don't need much - even three of them.”

“Don't buy too much new stuff. Go for used baby equipment.”

### FAQ 2 - What is it like being out and about with your babies?

In our survey of parents of triplets, quads or more, nearly 49% said they found it difficult to cope with getting out and about in the early days.

With help, or on your own, getting out



and about is important as even ten minutes of fresh air can help you and your babies.

Many parents of triplets and quads have said that they found they attracted a lot of attention when out and about. This can at times feel overwhelming. When asked what they found hard to cope with, several mothers said:

“...The amount of attention you are going to get once you have had the babies. Going out with a triple pushchair makes you an instant celebrity everybody wants to stop, stare and chat. It can be exhausting.”

“...Dealing with public attitudes towards multiples in the fact they feel they have to ask such personal questions.”

It can help to try and see it from a positive perspective. Your children are going to be admired and smiled at and you will undoubtedly be commended on your hard work far more frequently than mothers of singletons.

Trying to enjoy the praise and support you may receive from strangers can help you feel more positive.

### FAQ 3 - What do I do if I feel like I am struggling to cope with crying babies?

Ask for more help if you can. If you feel overwhelmed, you should seek support from [Tamba Twinline 0800 138 0509](#). Open daily, from 10am to 1pm and 7pm to 10pm, our helpline is staffed by trained volunteers who are all parents of multiples themselves.

Tamba runs its very own [group specifically for parents of triplets or more](#), where you can get help and advice on how to cope and join the Facebook group and / or forum to talk to others in the same situation.

Tamba also have some video clips of one of our triplet mums talking about her experiences which you may find helpful.

Here are some ways of coping from a couple of our survey respondents:

“There will be times when all of you will be crying! It's ok to put them down in a safe place and take five minutes.”

“Make sure the babies are safe then go to the bottom of the garden and SCREAM! It helped with any frustration and I always ended up laughing and thinking how silly I must have looked. Later on I used yoga!”

## Four Personal Stories from Parents of Triplets

Parents of triplets share their personal experiences below. You should also read Tamba's [Triplets, Quads or More! factsheet](#) and [FAQs](#) that we produced along with these personal stories.

### Kate Pelazza - Mum to triplets (two boys and one girl)

17th January 2011 and a phone call between myself and my mum following my first scan went a little like this: "Mum, we're pregnant and there's not just one". "Twins?!!" she asked. To which I replied, "There's not just two." My Mum's response summed up my pregnancy and those early years: "What



can you get that's more than two?" Welcome to the world of triplets.

Discovering I was pregnant with three babies was a moment I'll never forget; I was shocked, but absolutely thrilled. Once we'd had our 12-week scan and been informed of the risks, we tried as best as we could to stay positive and try to enjoy our very special pregnancy. From twelve weeks onwards I had fortnightly scans at a hospital which was able to deliver specialist care in a high risk pregnancy.

I also had an existing medical condition which required further monitoring and placed me at a

potentially greater risk of complications. Despite this, I enjoyed a relatively uneventful pregnancy.

At around 20 weeks I was given iron tablets as I was found to be slightly anaemic and from approximately 26 weeks, I started to develop Braxton Hicks Contractions. At 24 weeks I was signed off from work, kicking and screaming, as a primary school teacher. I had started to develop oedema (fluid retention in the body) and standing for the majority of the day along with an hour's commute into London, became near impossible.

Regardless, I was very determined to try and continue everyday activities, for example, shopping and walking through town throughout my last two months of pregnancy. This I managed until I reached about 32 weeks. At that point, the pressure of my triplets and the oedema became too great and aside, from hospital appointments, I spent the last two weeks at home. At 34 weeks + 4 days my boy-boy-girl trio were born weighing 2.32kg, 1.4kg and 1.98kg.

I found my planned C-section extremely anxious. I wish I'd felt more relaxed as I struggle to remember parts of it. Including myself and my husband, there were 21 people in the theatre that morning. The babies were delivered within one minute of each other. Two cried straight away, one didn't. He was our smallest and the one that would need help following delivery.

After they were cleaned and checked, our biggest boy and our little girl were wrapped up and shown to us. Our



littlest, weighing 1.4kg, was taken to the Special Care Baby Unit (SCBU) straight away. I was very fortunate to have two of my babies with me straight away, but I was poorly and missed the first feeds and the first nappy changes. That evening I was finally transferred to the postnatal ward with two of my trio. I still hadn't met my little Matteo.

Twenty-four hours after giving birth I got to meet my other son in SCBU. He had required seven hours of Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP) and was being tube fed. He couldn't regulate his body temperature, was jaundiced, had a heart murmur and had anaemia of prematurity. However, we were lucky. I remember the consultant telling us, "There's nothing wrong with him, he's just tiny," and most of these issues rectified themselves by the time he was a month old (he needed an iron supplement for a little while after coming home).

My other two were struggling to feed and were taking about 7mls in one and half hours. They both lost about 12% of their body weight and so within a few days they had nasogastric tubes inserted



and we tube-fed them on the ward. The medical staff removed the tubes after 24 hours explaining that they didn't want the babies to get used to them and lose their fight to feed. My breast milk never came and so we formula-fed our trio, although we happily consented to donor breast milk for our son in SCBU.

As my two with me weren't ready to be discharged, but were with me on the ward, I felt I was in some sort of limbo. I wasn't allowed home until they were. I began to struggle to meet their needs with regards feeding and see my son who was a couple floors up in the SCBU.

Eventually, after about a week, I was transferred with my two babies to the family unit upstairs. This was a facility with two bedrooms reserved for parents who had babies in SCBU. It meant I was close to my littlest and could try and meet his needs and those of his brother and sister.

These first two weeks were emotionally and physically exhausting and one of the hardest times I've experienced to date.

Myself and two of my babies were finally discharged after two weeks. My other son was transferred to our local hospital's SCBU two days later and remained there for a further two weeks.

We were all reunited when our babies turned 1 month old.

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## Theresa McDonald Hindle - Mum to triplet boys

I have three boys - two identical (monochorionic) and one non-identical.

I had a heavy bleed at six weeks and went for blood tests to see if I was still pregnant. I was (!) and I was told it could be twins but I'd have to wait until eight weeks for a scan.

I started reading up on twin pregnancies and only glanced at information on higher order multiples never thinking that it would happen to me! Needless to say we were very shocked when the sonographer found three little heart-beats.

We were carefully monitored by the consultant at our local hospital. Our scan frequency slowly increased, and by week

24 I was being scanned every other or every day. Luckily, I had decided to stop working at 24 weeks and spent all my time eating or sleeping.

It became apparent that our smallest was getting intermittent blood flow so we had to deliver early. I had steroid injections to help the babies' lungs mature and we eventually made it to 30 weeks + 4 days!



The boys were born weighing 2lb 8oz, 3lb 2oz and 3lb 4oz. They all breathed with just a little help for a few days (CPAP) and were generally healthy.

They were in Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) for less than two weeks and moved on to SCBU. There were a few setbacks with typical prem issues around coordinating breathing and swallowing, but they progressed well and we went home the week of their due date.

NICU and SCBU can be stressful but we always felt that the staff were providing the best possible care. We asked lots of questions and always felt in the loop with what was going on.

Going home was BIG! We were so excited but scared to death as well. We brought all three home together and quickly tried to establish a routine of feeding and sleeping. We were on a three and half to four hour schedule but with feeds taking up to two hours at a time, there was not much time to rest before the next feed was due. I was trying to breastfeed but two of the three weren't taking to it so I was also expressing between feeds.

At night one of us slept on a single bed in the boys' room while the other slept in our bedroom. We were lucky in that my husband was on gardening leave so he was at home full-time with me.

We don't have family nearby so we eventually hired a maternity nurse to help us out so that we could get a bit of a

break. This was the best decision, although at the time we thought it was a bit of an expensive solution. The maternity nurse not only gave us a break, but she taught us the tricks of the trade and how to simplify our routine.

As the boys grew, and their needs changed, she showed us how to adjust our schedule to accommodate them. I would highly recommend that you request friends and family who want to give you gifts to give you money towards a maternity nurse instead. We got loads of lovely clothes that the boys never wore. The money would have been put to good use paying for the help we desperately needed.

For me, on my journey as a triplet mum, I found the first six months were the hardest. My advice is to enlist as much help as you can. I found that drawing up a list of jobs that needed doing and getting a rota of people to help out with feeds, shopping, making meals... anything that needed doing, really helped me. My priority was to feed my babies and get plenty of food and rest for myself. I also found it important to get out. Taking the babies for a walk during one of their nap times and going to baby groups really helped me feel less isolated. It's amazing how fresh air, a bit of exercise and a chat can energise an exhausted body.

Babies needs change as they grow. I found that I needed to be flexible and learn to go with it, as when I resisted it this resulted in frustration.

Above all be proud of your accomplishments - having triplets or more is NOT easy. It's a great accomplishment that only a select group of parents get to achieve. Be kind to yourself and your partner. Praise and thank each other for the small things every day no matter how crabby and tired you feel.

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## Susan - Mum to triplet girls

Seeing the sonographer hold up three fingers is an image I will never forget. Her name and face escape me, but that's only fair - I had just heard life changing news! My husband and I had only been married for 7 weeks when we found out I was

expecting triplets. Even a strong family history of twins could not have prepared us for this news.

I recall calling my husband (I was alone for the first scan) to ask if we could meet for lunch. He feared the worst despite my reassurances that I was fine, but I needed to see him. How could I keep that kind of information to myself for six whole hours? We sat in stunned silence trying to digest the news and our lunch with the same levels of disbelief and wonder.

The thoughts racing through my husbands mind were all the practical things like...

- How are we going to cope?
- Will we need a bigger house?
- Will we need a bigger car?
- Will we need different jobs to fund it all?
- Who will help us? (We don't have family locally)

My thoughts included...

- I only have two hands, how am I going to hold all of them at once?
- What if they all cry at the same time?
- How am I going to breast-feed them?
- How will I get through the pregnancy in one piece?
- Will I ever sleep again?? (I am a self confessed selfish sleeper!)



Our healthy babies arrived safely by planned C-Section at 32 weeks + 4 days (every day mattered to me).

We were advised to be prepared for our babies to be in NICU until their full term due date and we went on a tour of the neonatal unit a few weeks before hand so we could understand what to expect.

I would recommend this as it was very helpful. Knowing that the chances our babies may have to spend time in this unit was reassuring for us as we knew we

would have 24-hour expert care for our precious girls. This time also allowed us to adjust to the very demanding feeding and care time schedules.

Care time in hospital involved nappy changes, feeding, winding, changing again if necessary and skin to skin care. These will always be some of my most precious memories of the very early days despite spending up to twelve hours at the hospital everyday for weeks.

I managed to breast-feed all of my babies (not exclusively) and I expressed often to build supply. The expressing whilst they were in hospital worked much better than when we all got home. Having the nurses on hand to assist allowed for real care-time and enabled me to focus on feeding.

We were discharged from hospital after 21 days. When at home, there were so many other things to do and to keep all of us fed (I am not talking about housework or laundry or even getting out of the house). I managed three and a half months of breast-feeding and expressing.

We decided that my husband would take his paternity leave when we were discharged from hospital rather than immediately after the birth (plenty of nurses on hand to assist in hospital whereas we had no one to help at home). This worked really well for us.

Getting into a routine worked for us and three years later, looking back, most of it has been a blur - but so rewarding! Writing this has brought back many memories of the early days and looking at photographs has filled my heart yet again.

I wish you all the best. It is the most incredible journey!

## Charlotte Bird - Mum to triplet girls (and two older children)

Finding out I was expecting not just one baby but three was, as you would expect, one heck of a shock! I can't repeat what I blurted out to the sonographer (who was herself equally as shocked) for risk of



offence, but you can imagine!

The pregnancy was hard - really hard - I was so tired! I managed to carry my triplet girls to 30 weeks + 4 days, so when they were born they were the tiniest babies I had ever seen, weighing between 3 and 4lb, and they were all rushed to SCBU where they spent seven weeks until they were strong enough to come home, weighing just 6lb!

You need to get super-organised. Think ahead in every aspect of life. On a daily basis get used to getting clothes and nappies laid out the night before and breakfast prepped as much as possible - especially if you have to be out of the house by a certain time in the morning.

Being able to walk downstairs and have everything waiting really makes a huge difference, especially if you have had a rough night. Also, look out for reduced items in at sale times when you are shopping. If you see three winter coats for next year with 70% off, get them now and put them away! You'll be glad twelve months later that you haven't got to spend £90 on winter coats! This goes for anything - clothes, bedding, toys, etc.

Most importantly though, embrace being 'parents of higher order multiples'! You will be blessed with children who are never lonely and will be the recipient of unending love and cuddles. TRIPLETS ROCK!

Thank you for downloading our factsheet. Feedback from our user community is very important to Tamba. Please complete this survey to help us continue to ensure we meet the needs of our community:  
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