

How Nurses Help Moms through Complicated Pregnancies

From a Complicated Pregnancy to Her Twins' Second Birthday

Jasmine* was pregnant with twin girls and about to become a first-time mother. Like many pregnant women and new moms, Jasmine wasn't sure what to expect. However, her VNS Health registered nurse Jenn, who is part of the national Nurse-Family Partnership program, was there for Jasmine every step of the way – including when she experienced complications that were potentially life-threatening for her and her babies.



Jasmine is known as a multitasker extraordinaire – and nothing requires multitasking like taking care of two newborns. With Jenn's help, Jasmine learned to navigate the health challenges that arose during and after her pregnancy and was able to keep her girls on track with their developmental milestones.

Helping Jasmine Through a Complicated Pregnancy

As an NFP nurse, Jenn works with first-time parents like

Jasmine, providing resources and care throughout the pregnancy and up until the child's second birthday. During Jasmine's pregnancy, Jenn discovered that Jasmine hadn't received some crucial prenatal care: shots for Rh incompatibility.

Rh factor is a protein found on the outside of red blood cells. Rh incompatibility happens when a parent whose cells do not have these proteins is pregnant with a fetus whose cells do have them. This puts the fetus at risk for complications during the pregnancy and childbirth. Although Rh incompatibility typically doesn't occur during a woman's first pregnancy, it is possible.

Rh incompatibility usually can be treated with a series of shots. Although Jasmine had been diagnosed with Rh incompatibility, she had not received treatment. Once Jenn realized this, she worked with Jasmine's doctor to ensure that Jasmine got her shots.

Jasmine had another scare when she developed preeclampsia – a serious condition that can develop after the 20th week of pregnancy. If it isn't treated, preeclampsia can be fatal for the woman, her child, or both.

Once Jasmine was diagnosed, Jenn helped her understand her condition and showed her how to monitor her health to help prevent complications.

Welcoming Her Twins

After Jasmine gave birth to her baby girls, Bella and Esmé, Jenn continued to support the new family, teaching Jasmine parenting skills.

Jenn has been with me every step of the way, guiding and supporting me and helping me get the best care for me and my babies. Jenn and the NFP program taught me so much about

parenting and healthy child development.

– Jasmine, participant in the NFP program at VNS Health

For example, Jasmine was putting both of her babies to sleep on their bellies in the same crib until Jenn taught her about the risk of sudden infant death syndrome and the importance of back sleeping and separate cribs. Jenn connected Jasmine to community resources to get a second crib, as well as diapers and wipes, through the VNS Health Patient Assistance Fund.

The NFP Program at VNS Health

The NFP program is free for first-time parents across the country. At VNS Health, our NFP program is available to first-time parents and children who live in the Bronx or Nassau County, are in the first or second trimester of pregnancy, and meet certain income requirements.

NFP nurses provide many types of support, including:

- Teaching parents about pregnancy, childbirth, and child development
- Monitoring the mother's and baby's health, both before and after birth
- Helping parents understand the basics of baby care, such as feeding and bathing, as well as safe sleep practices
- Demonstrating ways to interact with the baby to promote proper growth and development
- Assisting parents with personal goals, like continuing their education or finding a job

- Connecting parents with resources like mental health care, health insurance, medical care, child care, and libraries

Once families graduate from the NFP program, they can join the Nurse-Family Partnership Alumni Alliance, where they can meet other families who were part of the NFP program, continue learning from child development experts, and get information about making choices for their child's schooling.

The Most Valuable Lesson

Today, Jasmine gushes about her girls. She describes Bella as the independent twin who likes to explore everything on her own, and Esmé as the learner. "ABC's, 1,2,3's, she's got all that," says the toddlers' proud mother.

As she watches her girls grow, Jasmine is grateful for the services she received through NFP visits. Perhaps the most valuable lesson that Jasmine has learned is that she is a good mother. That means not only doing her best for the girls but also demonstrating the power of hard work as she launches an online clothing business to support their future.

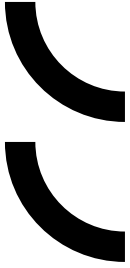
"Our model is to help mothers succeed by unlocking their own greatness," says Jenn. "Sometimes it's the littlest things that inspire hope, hearing that she is doing a great job."

**Patient and family names have been changed to protect privacy.*

If you need support, we're here to help

Your donation can help people like Jasmine as they learn about motherhood through the NFP program.

Donate Today



For more information about giving, contact our Development team at [1-212-609-1525](tel:1-212-609-1525) or development@vnshealth.org.