

The 3D scan of a disabled baby's smile that convinced his mother not to abort him

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disabled baby's smile that convinced his mother not to abort him - and why she is grateful she was able to cuddle him with joy for a few precious hours

- Katyja Rowe was told her baby would never be able to walk or talk
- But real-time moving scan showed him blowing bubbles and waving arms
- She decided to go through with the birth but he died nine hours later

By *LARISA BROWN*

A mother was unable to abort her severely disabled son despite doctors' warnings after seeing her baby's smile in a 3D scan picture.

Katyja Rowe was told her baby's brain had not formed properly and that he would never walk or talk and would need 24-hour care.

But after seeing real-time moving scans of him smiling, blowing bubbles, kicking and waving his arms she made the heartbreaking decision to go through with the birth.

Tragically Lucian, as she named him, died nine hours after he was born.



Mother Katyia Rowe gave birth to her severely disabled son Lucian, despite doctors advising her to have an abortion, after seeing a 3D scan of him smiling, pictured

Despite the ordeal, Ms Rowe said she had no regrets going through with the birth as she was able to cuddle her baby son.

Katyia, 26, a training administrator, said: 'We were devastated to be told our son's brain abnormalities were so severe they were life limiting we should consider a termination.

'Further scans were arranged to assess the extent of his disabilities but when I saw him smiling and playing inside me I knew I couldn't end his life.

'If he could smile and play and feel then despite his disabilities he deserved to enjoy whatever life he had left, no matter how short. Just because his life would be shorter or different, didn't mean he didn't deserve to experience it.

'As long as he was pain free I vowed to let him enjoy his life both while inside me and outside, no matter how long that be.'

Miss Rowe, from Telford, Shropshire was thrilled to discover she was expecting a baby with partner of four years security officer Shane Johnson, 26, in March last year.

She added: 'It was a shock but we were thrilled. Shane and I were so excited and looking forward to the birth. We had so many plans for the future and could not wait to meet our baby.'



Katyia Rowe and her partner Shane decided to have the baby despite the complications, saying the child deserved to live

'Our first scan at three months was wonderful. When we saw our baby on screen for the first time we fell in love straight away. As far as we were concerned everything was perfect.'

The couple decided to wed when their son was old enough to walk down the aisle with them.

Only the 20-week scan highlighted complications.

Following further tests, doctors told Miss Rowe and her partner of four years that their baby's brain had not formed properly and he would be severely disabled.

They were then told the tragic news by experts at Birmingham Children's Hospital that their child would never walk or talk and would need 24-hour care.

The couple were offered the chance to terminate the baby at 24-weeks.

But despite his poor prognosis, being able to watch her son in real time 3D scans during the screening tests, Miss Rowe said she was astonished to see him smiling, blowing bubbles, kicking and waving his arms.

She said: 'Despite all the awful things I was being told, while he was inside me his quality of life looked to be wonderful and no different to any other baby's, he was a joy to watch.

'I was told he would never walk or talk yet the scans showed him constantly wriggling and moving.

'As I watched I knew that while I was carrying him he still had a quality of life and it was my duty as a mother to protect that no matter how long he had left, he deserved to live.'



The couple pictured together in the room that was decorated for their baby boy Lucian. Tragically he died nine hours after his birth

Katyia was told if her son survived birth he would require 24 -hour care for the duration of his life expected to be anything up to five years.

She added: 'It didn't phase me at all. It was ironic because I had never considered myself particularly maternal but now I wanted nothing more than to care for my son and give him the best quality of life possible. I was more than happy to dedicate my life fully to his care.

'I researched all his disabilities to prepare myself fully for his needs. I never had a moment of doubt. I only had to look at the scan pictures of him enjoying life in the womb to know I was doing the right thing by giving him a chance.

'Not knowing how long he would live meant we were determined to enjoy him for as long as we could. We learned he loved the shower and would kick when I sprayed the water on my tummy.

'As he grew bigger I could see his little feet and hands prodding through my bump when he wriggled. He may not have been born but he was already our son and I took each movement as a sign we had done the right thing.

'I would talk to him and play him music because I wanted him to experience as much as possible.'

Because of her son's disabilities he couldn't swallow the amniotic fluid surrounding him meaning Kaytia had to undergo painful draining procedures for the last nine weeks of her pregnancy.

She said: 'It was agony and I knew some people questioned if it was worth putting myself through all this for a severely disabled baby that may not live for long.

'But I never ever thought like that. As a mother you will do anything for your child and for me I became a mother as soon as I fell pregnant, that job had started already.'

And for Katyia the rewards for her pregnancy were she says the most joyful and fulfilling nine hours of her life - the time she spent with her son.

'It was without doubt the happiest moment of my life. Lucian could have died at anytime in my womb but he held on long enough for us to meet properly.'

- Mother Katyia Rowe



[she didn't regret her decision](#)

He was delivered after being induced when her waters went on October 23rd last year at the Royal Shrewsbury hospital and as expected was rushed straight to special baby care for his condition to be assessed.

She says: 'I was prepared not to be taking our baby straight home like all the other new parents, but beyond that I didn't know what the future held.'

But shortly after the birth midwives burst into the delivery suite and warned Katya her son had just minutes to live.

She says: 'I was shocked but we had already decided that after his birth we would let Lucian lead the way. I didn't want him given any unnecessary treatment if ultimately it wouldn't help him.'

'He had already given me the greatest honour of being his mummy for the last nine months. It was up to him now if he was ready to go.'

Katya rushed to his side and finally the son she had nurtured for nine months was placed in her arms.

She said: 'It was without doubt the happiest moment of my life. Lucian could have died at anytime in my womb but he held on long enough for us to meet properly.'

'My son looked utterly perfect.'

'The love and joy I felt the moment they put Lucian in my arms told me it had all been worth it.'

She added: 'I thought I didn't want to be a mother but Lucian taught me it is the most wonderful job in the world and I will always be grateful for that.'

Before his death he was held in his mother's arms and he even met his grandparents.

To donate to charity Sands in Lucian's memory visit [here](#).

Source : dailymail.co.uk