

Dr. Molly Obergfell and Dr. David Buelna, both veterinarians at Circle B Veterinary Hospital, are raising their sons Eli and Logan in Katy

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- Dr. Molly Obergfell



Logan's Fight for Life

After weighing two pounds at birth and suffering multiple organ failures, Logan Buelna proves that
LIFE IS WORTH FIGHTING FOR

Written by Meagan Clanahan | Select photography by Candace Cook

For Dr. Molly Oberfell and Dr. David Buelna, the early stages of their first pregnancy with their son Logan was picture perfect by all medical standards. After meeting at Kingsland Animal Hospital where they were both employed as veterinarians and subsequently marrying in 2013, they were overjoyed to be expecting their first son. They never expected the twists and turns that would come when he burst onto the scene in the early hours of June 18, 2015.

Unexpected Arrival

It was early June when Molly started to feel like something wasn't right. One Saturday she landed in the hospital, but was sent home being told she had Braxton Hicks contractions. The next week she noticed that she felt extremely sluggish, but chalked it up to working long hours and not knowing what to expect during a first pregnancy. Little did she know that she would find herself in the emergency room fully dilated at just 25 weeks pregnant. Her doctors at Memorial Hermann Katy Hospital did everything they could to slow down delivery including doses of magnesium and steroids, but it was too late. Logan David Buelna made his appearance weighing in at a tiny 2 lbs., 2 oz. and 13 inches long. Molly tearfully recalls those first moments. "They took him immediately to intubate him and get him stabilized," she remembers. "There was plastic stuff all around him and I could barely see him." Because the NICU at the local hospital could not accommodate a micro premie, plans were immediately made to chopper him to Children's Memorial Hermann Hospital in the Medical Center. "I was still recovering, so I had to stay behind while David made the trip with Logan," she says. "I had one chance to see him and he grabbed my finger before they left. Not being with my baby was the longest night of my life."

Predictably Unpredictable

Seven long days passed before they were even able to hold their precious son using skin-to-skin, a.k.a kangaroo care. A few weeks into their NICU journey, he went into congestive heart failure because his PDA (patent ductus arteriosus) never fully closed, thus leading to multiple organ shut down, including his liver and kidneys. The Buelnas made the difficult decision to transfer Logan to Texas Children's Hospital (TCH) for heart surgery on his PDA. Once at TCH,

doctors were able to stabilize him, repair his heart, and get the rest of his organs functioning again. From there, it became a feeding and growing game, as well as also working on his ability to breathe without the use of the CPAP and oxygen.

The Will to Fight

While both David and Molly spent every weekend at the hospital with Logan, Molly was the primary caregiver for Logan during his NICU stay while David held down the work front. She spent weeks pumping precious breast milk for Logan, setting her alarm every three hours for a session, day and night. With the exception of a few frightening nights, the Buelnas made a deal that she needed to come home every night, but she was right back crib side every morning for rounds to catch up on the latest news. "Just seeing our baby down there, it broke my heart to leave him every day," she recalls. "He was fighting so hard, you could see it. He wanted to be with us. I was his advocate, I had to be there. His will to live was my will to fight."

Surpassing Expectations

As his official due date drew nearer, Molly and David began to breathe sighs of relief. After passing his mandatory carseat test with flying colors and receiving good news on his retinal optic tests, it was finally time to go home, three and a half months after their journey began. After stocking their freezer with over 400 bags of breast milk from Molly, the family was finally released from TCH with their tiny fighter weighing almost five pounds more than he did at birth.

One would never guess today that Logan had such a tumultuous start. While still on the smaller side of the charts, he is a rambunctious, happy, and healthy 19-month-old who is the resident comedian of the household and a daddy's boy through and through. He has surpassed all medical expectations and was released from all outside therapies including occupational and physical. The future is bright for this little warrior and he's especially enamored with his new little brother, Eli, whom his parents welcomed full term in November 2016. **KM**

Logan weighed 2 lbs., 2 oz. when he was born



Seven days after he was born, Molly was finally able to hold her son

