

From High-Risk Pregnancy to Happy Family: Twin-to-Twin Transfusion Syndrome

Twin-to-twin transfusion syndrome (TTTS) is a rare but serious condition that can occur in pregnancies with identical twins (monochorionic diamniotic twins). It happens when there is an unequal division between the blood vessels that connect the twins' placentas, resulting in one twin (the donor) giving too much blood to the other twin (the recipient). This imbalance can lead to serious health risks for both twins.

Causes and Risk Factors

The exact cause of TTTS is unknown, but it is thought to be related to an abnormal development of the placenta. Risk factors for TTTS include:



Twin to Twin: From High-Risk Pregnancy to Happy Family (Twin-Twin Transfusion Syndrome, Pregnancy Crisis, Overcoming Pediatric Emergency) by Crystal Duffy

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

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Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
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- Being pregnant with identical twins
- Advanced maternal age
- Previous TTTS pregnancy
- Maternal diabetes

Symptoms

Symptoms of TTTS can develop at any time during pregnancy, but they are most common in the second and third trimesters. They can include:

- Too much amniotic fluid around the donor twin and too little around the recipient twin
- Differences in growth between the twins
- Swelling and heart failure in the recipient twin
- Anemia and stunted growth in the donor twin

Diagnosis

TTTS is diagnosed with an ultrasound. The ultrasound will show differences in the amount of amniotic fluid around the twins and may also show other signs of the condition, such as differences in heart rate or growth.

Treatment

Treatment for TTTS depends on the severity of the condition. In mild cases, the condition may be managed with monitoring and bed rest. In more

severe cases, treatment may include:

- Laser surgery to seal off the abnormal blood vessels
- Amnioreduction, which is removing excess amniotic fluid from around the donor twin
- Serial amniocentesis, which is draining excess amniotic fluid from the recipient twin
- Preterm delivery

Prognosis

The prognosis for TTTS depends on the severity of the condition and the gestational age at which the condition is diagnosed and treated. With early intervention, most twins with TTTS can survive and have a normal life. However, untreated TTTS can be fatal for both twins.

Emotional Impact

A diagnosis of TTTS can be a devastating for parents. They may feel overwhelmed, scared, and anxious about the future of their children. It is important for parents to seek support from family, friends, and healthcare professionals during this difficult time.

Support for Families

There are a number of organizations that can provide support for families affected by TTTS. These organizations offer information, support groups, and financial assistance. Some of these organizations include:

- The Twin-to-Twin Transfusion Syndrome Foundation (TTTSF)
 - The National Organization for Rare DisFree Downloads (NORD)
 - The March of Dimes
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TTTS is a serious condition that can have a significant impact on the health of twins and their parents. However, with early intervention and treatment, most twins with TTTS can survive and have a normal life. It is important for parents to be aware of the symptoms of TTTS and to seek immediate medical attention if they suspect their twins may have the condition.



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