
**Connecting the World to Fight Twin to Twin Transfusion Syndrome**
**411 Longbeach Parkway Bay Village, Ohio 44140 800-815-9211 tttsfoundation.org**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**BAY VILLAGE, OHIO** - The Twin to Twin Transfusion Syndrome Foundation is an international nonprofit organization solely dedicated to saving the lives of diagnosed twin and triplet babies.

The Foundation was established on December 7, 1989 after Mary Slaman-Forsythe and her husband Steve gave birth to their identical twins Matthew and Steven. Because of the syndrome, Steven passed away. Matthew survived. Little Steven was brought into the recovery room for a 'brief' visit with his parents. Mary later asked for a private room so she and Steve could visit longer with their son. As Mary held little Steven in her arms, she promised him and Matthew that they would be known and remembered and that she would find the answers. Mary never said good-bye, only I love you. She knew that the fight against twin to twin transfusion syndrome was enormous, but that it wasn't bigger than a mother's love. Steven and Matthew's promise has become Mary's life conviction. Since Matthew and Steven's birth, thousands of babies have been given a chance at life they would not have had without Mary's promise being kept.

Twin to twin transfusion syndrome (TTTS) is a disease of a single, monochorionic placenta shared by identical twins or triplets during pregnancy. The babies are normal and healthy but are receiving their blood and nutrition in a disproportionate way from their shared placenta. One baby, the recipient, gets too much blood overloading his or her cardiovascular system. The other twin, the donor, receives less then normal blood and may become smaller in size and severely anemic. There is a range to the severity of TTTS, but it is always life threatening. Because identical twinning happens by chance, all pregnant women could suffer from TTTS.

The main message for prospective parents is when they find out that they are pregnant with multiples is to immediately ask the question, **"Is there one placenta or two".** If there is one placenta, monochorionic, the Foundation strongly advocates being seen by a high-risk perinatologist for **ultrasounds every week from 16 weeks through delivery of the babies**. This is advocated even if there are not any signs of TTTS. Because the babies share a placenta, there can be problems separate to TTTS, but you also want to look for the signs of the syndrome that can seem to come out of no where within days, even during the delivery of babies going through an uneventful pregnancy.

TTTS is not hereditary or genetic, but random. It is the most challenging condition of contemporary obstetrics and can happen to any pregnant mother. With diagnosis and treatment, the babies have a chance. Without it, the odds are against them. The Foundation highly recommends and refers parents to Dr. Julian De Lia, the Founder of the International Institute for the Treatment of Twin to Twin Transfusion Syndrome. He is the pioneer of laser surgery to treat the abnormalities in the placenta. He may be reached at 414-447-3535 and tttsmd.com

# The Twin to Twin Transfusion Syndrome Foundation
# SIDE BAR

**It important to verify if you are pregnant with multiples by 10-16 gestational weeks.**
**If you are diagnosed with multiples, you need to ask:**

**Is there one placenta or two?**

If there is one placenta, it is called a monochorionic twin pregnancy with a 15-20% chance of developing twin to twin transfusion syndrome TTTS. TTTS is a disease of a single, monochorionic placenta shared by identical twins or triplets during pregnancy. The babies are normal and healthy but are receiving their blood and nutrition from the placenta in a disproportionate way. One baby, the recipient, gets too much blood overloading his or her cardiovascular system. The other twin, the donor, receives less then normal blood and may become smaller and severely anemic. There is a range to the severity of TTTS, but it is always life threatening. Because identical twinning happens by chance, all pregnant women could suffer from TTTS. TTTS is not hereditary or genetic.

The Twin to Twin Transfusion Syndrome Foundation strongly advocates being seen by a high-risk perinatologist for **ultrasounds every week from 16 weeks through delivery of the babies**. This is advocated even if there are not any signs of TTTS. Parents need to transfer care from an OB/GYN doctor to a high-risk maternal-fetal specialist.

**WARNING SIGNS OF TTTS**

**Warning signs in the mother include:**

- The sensation of a rapid growth of the womb
- A uterus that measures large for dates
- Abdominal pain or tightness, or uterine contractions
- Sudden increases in body weight
- Hand and leg swelling in early pregnancy

**Warning signs in the twins appear on ultrasound scans and include:**

- Evidence of a monochorionic or shared placenta
- A single placenta
- Same sex twins
- A thin, hard to see, dividing membrane

**Evidence of TTTS**

- Polyhydramnios (excess amniotic fluid) in the sac of one twin
- Oligohydramnios (decreased to no amniotic fluid) in the sac of the other twin
- Size differences (discordance) in the twins
- Hydrops fetalis (water in one baby's body from heart failure)

**Further information may be provided by contacting The Twin to Twin Transfusion Syndrome Foundation at 1-800-815-9211 and tttsfoundation.org**


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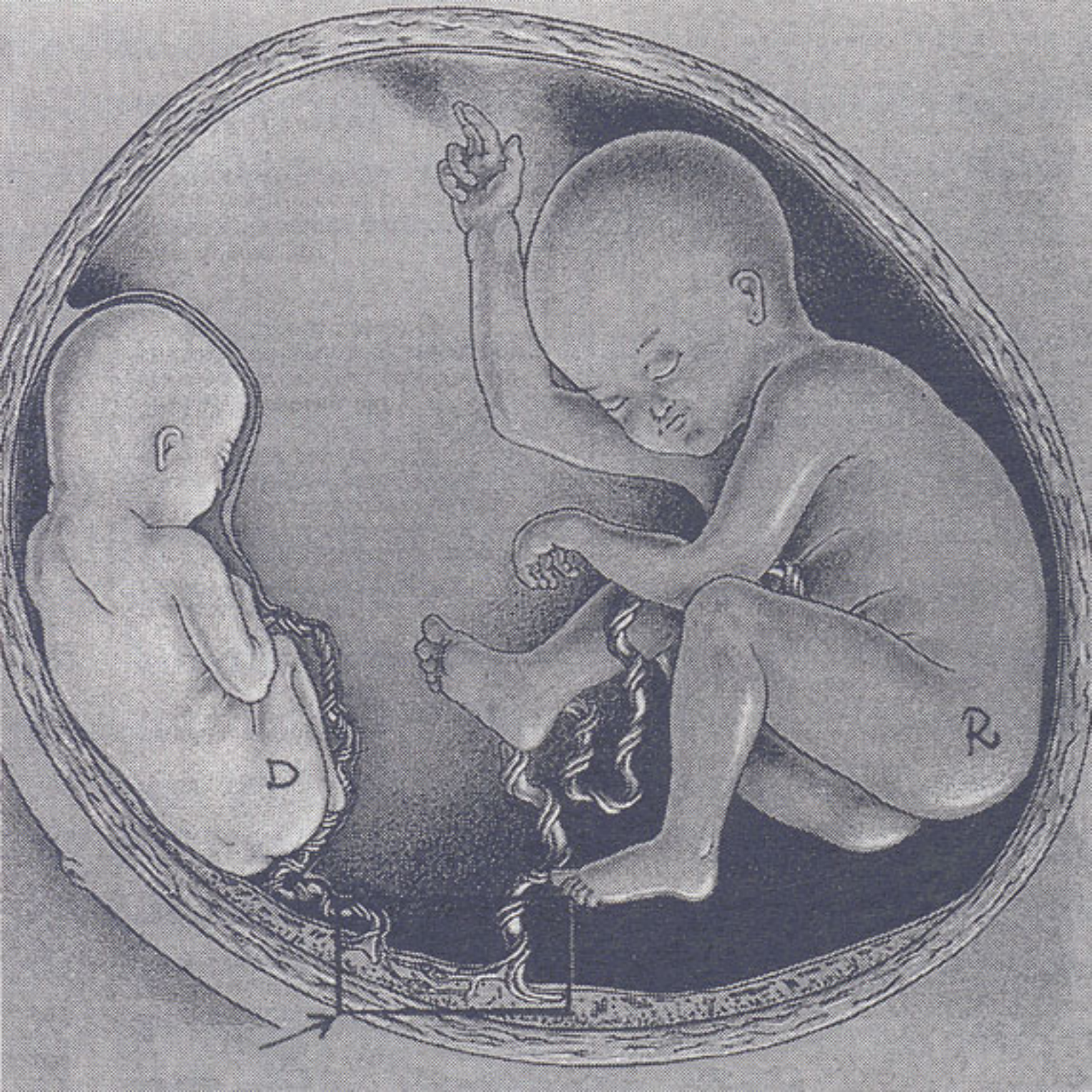
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