



LAUREN AND LILY:

A personal story

My name is Lauren Kyriacou. I'm twenty five years old. I was a pathology collector before I had my first child, Lily. I worked in St George Private Hospital for a few years, then I worked in GyMEA and then Kirrawee, so mostly in the Shire. I got married in October 2014. Lily was quite a big surprise.

Lily and I are volunteering to take part in a medical research project that the St George & Sutherland Medical Research Foundation has funded. It's a study with Associate Professor Gregory Davis and Research Midwife Lynne Roberts. The study will monitor new mums over five years. For the first time, the long term effects of my condition, pre-eclampsia, will be documented.

By being involved in medical research, I'm hoping to limit the risks for anyone else.

I never want anyone to go through what I did.

I know pre-eclampsia can't be prevented at the moment, but it would be good if people could find out earlier, or not have to go through such a traumatic experience with it.

It's good that research is happening because it would be nice to know if there are any conditions that could affect Lily and me. The study might also help with my next pregnancy, which would be good. This is my story – and it tells you why I'm such a keen supporter of research and the Foundation:





My pregnancy was difficult.

During my first trimester, I was in the emergency department on Christmas Day because I was bleeding pretty heavily. We thought we had lost Lily, and it wasn't until mid-January that I knew I was still pregnant. It was scary.

When I was 24 weeks along I had a check-up I was told that there was a risk of pre-eclampsia. But it wasn't until about 34 weeks that issues emerged. During a check-up in Sutherland we found out that Lily seemed to be a bit growth restricted. The baby was still small, but she was moving. Her heartbeat was good. But the protein in my urine had gotten higher, and my blood pressure was a lot higher.

The doctors decided that I wasn't going home, and that I was being transferred to St George Hospital, because I was a high risk case.

Without the support of both St George & Sutherland Hospitals, I might not be here today. My condition was potentially fatal for both me and my baby.

For me, things took a turn for the worse. I started to feel really dizzy and I

was really sick. My blood pressure was ridiculously high. So they put me on blood pressure tablets and I would start to feel better, but when they would start to wear off, I would go back to how I was. So, I had an ultrasound and they placed Lily at about 1.8 kilos, which is quite small, so we were a bit worried.

I had steroid injections to help develop Lily's lungs, in case I had to have her early. Then, the day after that I was even worse. I remember pacing, and feeling just terrible. I was really puffy and my feet were crazy swollen. The next day I couldn't see very well, and I was really starting to panic because it had been a long time since I'd felt the baby move. This happens when the placenta isn't working as well, because she's not

getting everything she needs. Instead of using her energy to move, she used it to grow. But that was pretty stressful.

One of the doctors came to check on me that night, and they hooked me up

to the monitors again to see what Lily was doing. She was kind of moving, but not nearly as much as she had been before. About half an hour after that I couldn't see at all. I was barely conscious. I got taken to a delivery suite, prepped and taken in. I don't remember having convulsions. I was not very conscious that last day. My husband Andrew was petrified.

It was such a relief that she came out breathing on her own! She was six weeks early, but smaller than she should have been. She was 34 weeks and 3 days, but only 1.87 kilos. She was teeny tiny.

She was in the preemie ward for three weeks, just 21 days. We thought she would be in there for 6 weeks, until she was due to come to term, but she did really well.

Despite all the complications I also remember the exciting things - watching my belly grow, going for my ultrasounds, finding out that she was a girl, and all those nice things.

We are so grateful to the teams at Sutherland Hospital and St George Hospital for looking after me, and for saving Lily's life.