

MRF Media contact ALRESFORD, Hants

CAOIMHE DUNNE

Our daughter Caoimhe was eight days old when she became very ill.

It was a Thursday morning and Caoimhe refused to feed. As she had only been home from hospital for four days, I thought maybe she was having a sleepy day.

As the day progressed Caoimhe was still not responding to me. I tried feeding her again around lunchtime and she still refused. At this stage her whole appearance was deteriorating. She was very lethargic, crying inconsolably, jittery, grunting and her face was quite blue and pale.

I immediately contacted the local hospital and they told me to come straight away. As Caoimhe was admitted she was slowly becoming more ill. Blood samples were taken and she was put into an incubator. Her sodium levels were very low and she stopped breathing a total of 15 times. There was worse to come when it was confirmed that Caoimhe had streptococcal meningitis, more commonly known as Group B Strep or GBS.

It was our worst nightmare. We were told that the next 24 hours were extremely crucial for Caoimhe. Luckily as she had been given intravenous antibiotics so quickly, she started to respond within 48 hours. It was just a sigh of relief when Monday came and Caoimhe opened her eyes. Thankfully I got her to hospital in time. The doctors said I saved her life and that is what keeps me strong every day.

I ask all other parents who read this; please be aware of the signs of meningitis. It was only when Caoimhe became sick that it was detected that I am a carrier of this deadly disease. Between five and 30% of women are carriers but most have no symptoms. If the infection is present during labour the baby may be affected.

Thankfully Caoimhe has made a great recovery. She is just a miracle baby and we are so grateful to have her.

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