



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on September 10, 2013

U.S. Congresswoman Gives Birth to “Miracle” Baby

A miracle has happened in Congress that has gotten the whole nation buzzing. Abigail Rose Beutler, the infant daughter of Congresswoman Jaime Herrera Beutler (R-Wash.) is a living, breathing answer to prayer, alive and doing well eight weeks after her premature birth July 15 — in large part because Beutler and husband Daniel rejected the advice of doctors to abort their baby or simply allow her to die.



Last May, shortly after the couple got the joyful news that Rep. Herrera Beutler (shown) was pregnant, a routine ultrasound revealed that there was something terribly wrong. “I could tell there was something kind of different,” Rep Beutler recalled to [ABC News](#) of that day, saying that the ultrasound technician “kind of went ashen” at what he saw on the screen.

What the technician saw was a baby without kidneys, a condition known as Potter syndrome, in which a critical lack of amniotic fluid prevents a baby’s lungs and kidneys from developing properly. The condition is usually fatal, prompting Rep. Beutler to release a statement saying that “there is no medical solution available to us. We are praying for a miracle.”

In Abigail’s case, according to Rep. Beutler, there was “a complete absence of amniotic fluid,” which led “multiple doctors” to advise her and her husband that Abigail’s condition “was incompatible with life and that, if she survived to term, she would be unable to breathe and live only moments after birth. We were also told that dialysis or transplant were not possible. The options we were offered were termination or ‘expectant management,’ that is, waiting for her to die. Instead, we chose to pray earnestly for a miracle. Many of you joined us.”

Beutler recalled that even as the doctors told her that her baby’s condition was hopeless she could feel the baby moving. “As the doctor was giving us the diagnosis [Abigail] was kicking,” Beutler told [Fox News](#). “We’re totally broken, we’re sobbing, we’re asking, ‘What can be done? Is there anything that can be done?’ And she’s moving inside of me, and the doctor is saying, ‘No, there is no option. This is fatal.’”

Instead of giving up, the Beutlers sought out other opinions and options. “Through the outreach of a parent who had faced a similar situation,” recalled Rep. Beutler, “we found a group of courageous and hopeful doctors at Johns Hopkins who were willing to try a simple, but unproven treatment by amnioinfusion.”

For the next five weeks doctors injected saline into Rep. Beutler’s womb, and with each treatment “we watched via ultrasound as Abigail responded to the fluid by moving, swallowing and ‘practice breathing,’” recounted the congresswoman. “The initial lack of fluid in the womb caused pressure on her head and chest, but over the course of the treatment we were able to watch them re-form to their proper size and shape. Her feet, which were clubbed in early ultrasounds, straightened. There was no way to know if this treatment would be effective or to track lung development, but with hearts full of hope, we put our trust in the Lord and continued to pray for a miracle.”



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Following the fifth week of treatments, Beutler went into labor, and despite efforts by doctors to prevent early delivery, Abigail was born at 28 weeks on July 15, weighing just two pounds, twelve ounces. "When she came out and everybody was quiet, I think ... a lot of these medical professionals were prepared for the worst," Rep. Beutler told Fox News. "And she looked at us, and she cried, which means her lungs were functioning. I think that cry kind of startled everybody in the room."

Dr. Steven Alexander, a pediatric kidney specialist at Stanford University's Lucile Packard Children's Hospital where Abigail is being treated, said that it is "unique in my experience for a baby to have the ultrasound picture this baby had and to be born with lungs that could support her."

Alexander said that Abigail will be on dialysis for the next year until she is ready for a kidney transplant, a surgery he said has a very high level of success in infants. "The kidney transplant success rate now is so good that we would predict a full adult life for her," he said.

Rep. Beutler said Abigail is "doing amazing," adding that "we've gotten to the point where we're holding her. She's playing. She will scream when her diaper's dirty. She is like any other baby. She has a few challenges, but man, she's determined."

The Beutlers said they have gone public with their story to give hope to other parents whose pre-born babies have been diagnosed with Potter syndrome. "Our daughter had a 100 percent fatal diagnosis, and she'll be eight weeks on Monday," Dan Beutler told reporters September 6. "We and many people around the country have spent a lot of time praying for her. We don't know exactly how it all worked out, but we know for sure she's a miracle."



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