

multiple seasons

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TWINS**

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FOR TWINS**

CHOOSING A
PRAM 

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Una van Staden

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Leane' and Ariana Oosthuizen were born at 37 weeks on 5th of September 2018 at the Wilgers hospital in Pretoria. They weighed 1.6kg and 1.7kg

They have just turned 2 years old but already have the personality of 10 year olds. When they were born their parents made a video of the birth, on the video the Dr said "they will definitely not win a beauty contest" but look at where they are now.

When mom was pregnant with them she had morning sickness throughout the pregnancy that caused her to lose weight and them not to pick up weight. From 34 weeks they stopped growing. After their birth they were in the NICU for 4 weeks, they were healthy but weak they could not control their oxygen levels and temperature, for this reason they had to stay in NICU to build up weight.

Now they are 2 healthy toddlers weighing 14 kg's each. They love to play outside, push their babies in the stroller's granny Connie gave them and be active kicking balls around. They are crazy about animals! Leane' is very contempt and calm most times she likes to do her own thing. Ariana is the mommy's girl if she can be with mommy she is happy. They like to play with their dolls, Granny Angie gave them steel cribs for their babies so they hush their babies to sleep then put them to bed. Their favorite food is anything they can eat and play with at the same time. They are very creative, they love drawing and painting.

But Over All they are a blessing to have. We could not imagine our lives without them!

Photo by: Pink photography and design

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welcome

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From the Editor

The swirl of life and its accompanying emotions can leave us feeling unfocused and frazzled. We have all be rather distracted lately. As parents we are faced with so many challenges, the constant hum of the news that relates to the virus with updates and changes in the levels of the country , being at home with our families while trying to hold down a job with some sort of normality and routine.

While doing all of this we need to keep on our "happy faces" for the children as they are the first to sense when something is wrong. So often while I am writing at home my children are interrupting with questions about school work and Dude Perfect on Youtube who is apparently "very educational" according to my boys.

One such activity involved finding words to describe the letters of our name. This turned into a fun game, filled with laughter and giggles as everyone gave suggestions . This is what we created for my name:

M = Mom
A = Ambitious
R = Reliable
I = Intelligent
O = Organised
N = Naughty

Moments like these create memories and are a great distraction from the every day life. There are of course other distractions we could really do with out like the persistent urge to check our phones for messages, the incoming emails and streams of worries that we as parents must deal with. I was thrilled to spend a weekend with my boys away in the bush at Shabani Cottage. Owned by parents of twins it is fully kitted out and suitable for the bigger families. The moments I will treasure were being able to read a book in a hammock as my phone didn't constantly go " ping " the poor signal out there means enjoying life and relaxing away from technology. The boys loved the freedom and open spaces.

There are some tips on what to take and do when you travel to make your lives a little easier. There is a fine line between being prepared and then over prepared. Sleep

while we travel is another " I wish I had a cure " for it topic for moms with little ones. Getting babies and toddlers to settle in their beds at home is difficult enough. Una from Pikanini Baby Academy shares some tips to make those long nights a little less daunting.

A big "Thank you" to the moms and dad who shared their personal journeys about giving birth to multiples and the roads they walked. Every story is heart warming and again helps us appreciate everything that we have in life.

Take a technology-free walk, play with the kids , read a few pages form a book and enjoy a good cup of coffee. These single steps is all it takes to recenter and reclaim our focus.

Enjoy Spring before we know the hot summer months will be upon us.

Happy Reading

Marion

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INSTAGRAM @south_african_multiple_birth_

BLOGS

MAMA ON THE RUN

By Bronwyn

WWW.MAMAONThERUN.COM



I am a physiotherapist, wife, mom of two and running enthusiast. I am passionate about health and fitness... but also very sleep deprived. I am fascinated by the human body... but also horrified by the state of mine two kids later. Mama on the Run is essentially just my documentation of the happy chaos that is my life. Join me on my journey of self improvement as I navigate the turbulent waters of motherhood while trying not to lose the person I was before it all. Follow my progress (or lack thereof) as I take my running from couch potato status to marathon and ultra-marathon adventures. As a physio I am in awe of the human body and how much it can achieve when we are brave enough to ask it to. My goal is to encourage and inspire my followers to pursue their own running goals while sharing my tips for injury prevention and management as I go through the process of increasing my own mileage.

BLOGS

KAJAL OF ALL TRADES

By Kajal Maharaj

[HTTPS://KAJALOFALLTRADES.WORDPRESS.COM](https://KAJALOFALLTRADES.WORDPRESS.COM)

INSTAGRAM ka_jillofalltrades



Good company in a journey makes the way seem shorter. — Izaak Walton

OK so I don't know who this guy is (or why he seems to think we need to make our journeys shorter), but I invite you to join me on my journey as I figure out motherhood, and how to live my best life. Who knows.. You may just enjoy the ride.

MBALI MASALLA

BeingMom | SlowLiving | Lifestyle

INSTAGRAM mbali_masalla





SLEEP TIPS FOR TWINS



Your beautiful little ones shared a “room” for 9 months; so it is recommended to keep them together, especially in the first few months, They will find great comfort in being close together.

At the beginning, your two bundles of joy are going to wake often to drink at night. For your own health, I would like to recommend that you wake both up at the same time to feed. As they get older and move to one feed at night (usually at 6 - 12 weeks) you can leave them to follow their own rhythms and not interfere with their natural sleep patterns.

They will also get used to each other’s sounds and movements - just as you and your husband may have struggled to sleep in the same bed at the beginning of your marriage, but now cope peacefully through the night.

Remember, babies are very noisy sleepers. They can sometimes even give a loud scream in deep phases of sleep - as we sometimes talk in our sleep. By rushing to their cot and making sure they are quiet, YOU may be the one disturbing their sleep.

It is important to understand that all babies (and adults) wake up at night. When we move from one sleep cycle to the next, we tend to almost wake up from a very light sleep. If our subconscious mind tells us we are safe, and that we are in the same environment or circumstance as when we fell asleep, then you move on to the next sleep cycle. For this reason, one should not be scared of babies waking each other up but more focused on teaching them to fall asleep on their own, should they wake up.

In the womb there was no distinction between night and day. Now it’s up to you to help them adjust so they can learn that nighttime is to sleep and the day is to wake up and play. Create a suitable environment in their nursery. In the evenings, keep things dark and quiet. If you need lights, make them soft and low. A dimmer switch works well for this. Reduce noise, or use background “white” noise such as a fan or classical music. A fan is also an easy way to reduce the risk of SIDS, due to overheating as a factor.

Use a soft, soothing voice during night feeding and other interactions to give your babies the message that night is the right time to sleep.

Many newborns are comforted by the act of swaddling with the Love to Dream range of swaddles. Unlike traditional swaddles that keep a babies arms by their side or across their chest, the unique arms UP design of the Swaddle replicates your baby’s behaviour in the womb, allowing the natural arms up position and movement of their hands to the mouth to truly self-soothe. The limitations of swaddling also prevent the babies’ natural startle reflex from waking them up.

Parents of twins often receive conflicting advice on when to feed their babies. Feeding on demand, which provides the breast or bottle when a baby signals that he may be hungry, can result in chaos in a home with multiples. It is sometimes more effective to use a more scheduled approach and coordinate your babies’ schedules by feeding them both at the same time. It works especially well with monozygotic (identical) twins who have a similar weight

and metabolism. Talk to your pediatrician to develop an appropriate feeding approach according to the needs of your babies.

As your babies grow and develop, they will begin to sleep and stay awake for longer. To help develop healthy sleeping habits, you can start developing a bedtime routine.

A consistent pattern of activity indicates the approach of bedtime, giving babies an idea that it is time to sleep. This routine will become a cherished part of the day for both you and the babies and can be an excellent opportunity to share some one-on-one time and bonding.

Start the routine with a bath, a soothing activity that physically relaxes your babies and then spend a few moments cuddling in the rocking chair before settling them into their cribs.

With two babies, both parents will have their hands full. Soon, you have a situation where both parents are exhausted and overwhelmed by the lack of sleep, or one parent sleeps soundly, and the other struggles with resentment. Then it’s time for a team-to-team approach.

With a little communication and planning, you can set up a structured schedule so that each parent gets a restorative shot of sleep. Dad may be on duty from 9pm to 1am. Mom then takes over from 1am until the morning. Consider your family’s lifestyle, habits, and preferences and work out an approach that meets both parents’ needs.

by: **Una van Staden** | 082 456 8566
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NIGHT NURSE

for your babies

Employing a night nurse or night nanny is not an easy task.

The lady will be in your house at night while you are sleeping and taking care of your most precious addition to your family.

I always say you are interviewing the ladies to see who fits into your personal space and who you as new mom can connect with. If the ladies have been sent via an agency it means they have the experience, relevant qualifications etc.

Over the years mom's have been blown away by the cv's I send but when the ladies arrive for the interview the mom just doesn't connect. If a new mom feels the night nurse is to over powering and is going to be telling the mom what to do, this leaves her feeling inadequate.

Staff can attend more courses and update their skills, but nobody can give a person a warm, friendly smile. Nobody can teach a person to love with all their being.

All staff should be happy to take instructions but in a subtle way impart their knowledge they have gained from years of experience working in various homes.

Some tips when interviewing for your perfect night help:

- * The person should arrive wearing a care workers uniform and flat soft shoes. She should not be walking around in socks.
- * She washes her hands on arrival and does this throughout her shift.
- * The night nanny will work a 12 hour shift, most common hours are 18h00 to 06h00 or 19h00 to 07h00.
- * Tea, coffee and a light snack is provided as one would for day staff. Serving of supper is not expected. The lady will bring her own additional food.
- * Some families have the nurse bath the baby at the start of their shift. This is a normal request.
- * The Night staff do not do any house work. They will clean any dishes they use and wash bottles.
- * The nurse sits (not sleeps) in the room that the babies are in. We recommend a comfortable arm chair and maybe a light blanket. If the nurse gets to cosy its only human nature that she will nod off.

- * Night staff do not sleep at work, they stay awake. They are expected to sleep when they go home and cannot have a day job also.
- * They can work any number of nights a week. There is no minimum requirement when employing some one.
- * Most contracts last between 1 to 3 months. One must be careful of night staff who deliberately keep the babies awake in order to stretch their employment.
- * Breast feeding moms can also use night staff. Having the help will cut down on moms awake time. After feeding the nurse will burp, change nappies and settle the baby back in its cot.
- * A night nurse earns anywhere from R350 up to R650 a shift. They prefer to know what they are earning a shift and not a flatsalary. These rates vary on experience, which province they are working in and how many nights a week they will work.

Having help at night makes the world of difference. A well rested mom can tackle a new day with a smile on her face and enjoy her babies.



Moving from the cot to the bed?

The transition from from a cot to a toddler bed can come at a variety of ages. Mom is itching to redecorate the nursery and change the colour scheme but don't rush. This is one of the major milestones for babies and toddlers. Many moms make this move anywhere from 15 months. However the 18 - 20 months seems to be the most popular time.

A toddler bed is generally a low bed with side rails. It will use the same size mattress as the one in the cot. Some families may just move straight to a single bed, if the family genes are tall chances are a toddler bed won't last long.

THE DO'S

- * Wait until they around the age of 2 years. The cots sides keep them safe so they don't worry about rolling off the side of the bed in their sleep.
- * Make a big deal out of the move, it could be viewed as a reward for good sleeping habits.
- * Take your child shopping to choose the linen, a fluffy bear to hug at night and a bed side light so if they need the toilet during the night or have a night terror they don't stumble around looking for a light switch.
- * If you are going bed shopping let them go with. Boys love the racing car style beds and girls love the princess four poster bed complete with fairy lights.

- * Create a bed time poster. This could include the story book titles, sleep time, wake up time, putting on the pjs, brushing teeth and lights out.
- * Stick to bed time routines. Most children go to sleep by 8pm. Allow for time to wind down, read a story, discuss the days events and say a pray. Give a final hug and kiss good night and "don't let the bed bugs bite" (this caused many giggles with my twins) and leave the room.
- * Return to the room continuously and put them back in bed speaking firmly and do not allow for any distractions like "one more hug".
- * Make sure the room is safe. The windows must have bars, the door should not have a key in it, no open plug points and jars of bum cream packed away.
- * Buy two pool noodles and hide them under the sheets . This will help to prevent accidental roll outs onto the floor in the middle of the night.

THE DONT'S

- * Don't allow bed time to creep later and later. Be firm about a set time.
- * Ignore the requests that will come like "I'm hungry, I can't find my bear etc" set limits and stick to them. You can acknowledge you have heard but don't act on the request.

- * If the child leaves the bed and room don't discuss it or make any conversation. Take their hand and silently return them to bed. No matter how tempting it is to talk, don't.
- * Never sit in the room and allow them to fall asleep on your lap, in your arms etc. If you are the pillow they will struggle to settle down alone.
- * Don't shout at them. This is a big change in their lives. Have patience , it can take 2 - 3 weeks for a full transition.
- * Twins may not be ready at the same time. However don't hold one child back if it is ready. There is no right way here but consider each ones needs and don't force one child if the child is not ready.
- * Don't use bunk beds. In America it is recommended that no child under the age of 6 years should sleep in a bunk bed.
- * A cot and potty training don't usually mix well so if you have started potty training don't keep them in the cot. Those 2am runs could become very messy.

With so much advice its best to follow your motherly instinct. A 2nd birthday is a great time to introduce the new bed, but then again nothing is cast in stone. Do what you think and feel is best for you children.

One last try



Our journey started in 2005 when we were just teenagers in high school. We fell in love at first sight and just knew we were soulmates. We got married in 2011 after being together for six years.

We wanted to start a family right away, but after 2 years nothing happened. We realised that there may be a problem and decided to see a doctor, that referred us to another doctor, that ended up being a few doctors after that. A bomb was dropped on us after seeing all the doctors, scans and tests it was confirmed that we will unfortunately be one of the couples that struggle with infertility. It came as a big shock to us, as both of us were fit, young and had sober habits.

There were so many days we talked and dreamt about our future with little ones running around. It all changed that second when we found out that both of us had fertility problems and the only way we would be able to have children would be through fertility treatments.

We decided to go to one of the best clinics that would give us the chance on realising our dreams of our little family. Another bomb dropped when we found out just how much these treatments cost and that we were required to go through the most advanced treatment ICSI. We had to make some tough decisions and sacrifices.

Our family and friends didn't always understand what we were going through or what we had to sacrifice. We had one sperm retrieval, three egg retrievals, four implants and miscarried with twins at 9 weeks of

pregnancy. It was an absolute rollercoaster of emotions, questions, and financial troubles for four years.

We got to a point that we couldn't bare another negative result or any more meds. But we wanted a family so badly we wanted to try one more time. We had two embryos implanted with a slim chance that one will make it. We finally got a positive again and we couldn't be happier to find at our 6 week scan that we had two heart beats. Over the moon is an understatement when I tell people how grateful we were for a good and healthy pregnancy.

Our two beautiful and perfect girls were born on the 12th of June 2019. After a week in NICU we could finally bring them home. Our home is now complete with little ones running around just as we had dreamed of for all those years.

We wanted to share our story so it could maybe give some couples hope or courage to try just one more time. It's all worth it in the end.

By mom: Irene Nel





A family getaway in the bush

Astoundingly beautiful natural scenery that surrounds Shabani Cottage is the best way to describe this inviting property tucked away amidst the mountains of Doornkop Fish & Wildlife Nature reserve. Modern decor with a touch of Africa gives it a cozy feel making it an ideal destination for all seasons of the year. Warm - hearted hospitality welcomes you to this intimate, luxurious property. We were met with a beaming smile from Denzel the complimentary chef who also showed us the ropes.

Popular activities while residing at the cottage include daily game drives that are conducted in search of the various wild animals as well as the elusive giraffe which we were super excited to spot on our final day. He gracefully walked across the road in front of us with yellow billed oxpeckers hanging on. They are known to have a beneficial relationship that provides the giraffe with a cleaner, healthier skin. Other recommend activities include the hiking trails in the 2000 hectares as well as mountain bike riding, horse riding and fly fishing at one of the numerous well stocked dams. To expand your knowledge of the area put your feet up while swaying gently in the hammock with one of the many books found on the bookshelf. Indulge in sheer relaxation as you unwind next to the pool overlooking the African bush veld .

An ideal family destination for up to 8 people you have the entire property to yourself . For the less adventurous they can enjoy the activities in the man cave like table tennis, watching TV, a game of darts and kids can

play in the garden building sand castles, jumping on the trampoline and swinging to their hearts content. Owned by a family who has twins the cottage is set up just for that (two high chairs, a lovely selection of outdoor toys to them busy and more)

After a day out exploring there is nothing better than walking into a house to the sound of french fires sizzling in a greasy skillet. mmmmm. The grand feast of a holiday lunch isn't complete if there is no banana split: three scoops of ice cream with banana halves on either side and a big mound of whipped cream on top, laced with chocolate sauce and sprinkled with chopped nuts- all topped off with a plump red cherry. Chef Denzel works magic with his hands, from the fresh chilled summer fruit in the fridge - its colourful, juicy and sweet to the rich, aromatic smell of fried russians. Every meal was a treat and his presence makes the holiday complete.

A mere 20km away is the town of Carolina in Mpumalanga which was established as a trading post in 1886 on Groenvlei and Goede Hoep farms, but another story tells the tale of Cornelius Coetzee who offered parts of his farm, Steynsdraai, for the establishment of the village, but only on the condition that it be named after his wife. Although the town was almost completely destroyed during the second Anglo-Boer War, it was rebuilt shortly afterwards and still has a few of its original sandstone buildings around the church square. A statue stands outside the church in commemoration of lives lost during the war.

Carolina is the resting place of internationally-acclaimed painter Bertha Bonnefoi of the Everard group of artists. Driving through town one can't miss the bright red repurposed double decker bus. The internationally-acclaimed Everard group of artists, who lived in the nearby hamlet of Bonnefoi which has since been abandoned, can be viewed with a private tour that paints the picture of the ghost town at its peak in the 1900s - and you can imagine the goings about of the manor house, hotel and post office. Painter Bertha Bonnefoi (nee Everard) is buried in the Carolina cemetery.

Another option for a tour is of the surrounding region where you will learn about the intriguing Bokoni civilisation or 'the forgotten people of Mpumalanga' as they are known, who inhabited the area for 500 years until the early 19th century. They ruled over large portions of Mpumalanga's escarpment and built concentric stone-walled enclosures, roads and terraces that have made the area of particular interest to archaeologists and historians.

Mpumalanga, just like the rest of the country, fuses the views and landscapes with a splash of magic. Guests can immerse themselves in the wild side while enjoying the spoils and comfort of this exclusive and unforgettable adventure.

For more information on this holiday cottage and other tailored African adventures go to www.thesafariguys.com





From left to right: Katiso and Reatile. Age: 3 years.



From left to right: Lune and Luna, aged 10 weeks



From left to right: Liah and Miah. Age: 4 years.



From left to right: Casey-Lee and Keera-Shea Ives. Age: 8 years, 9 months.



Left to Right: Stephanie and Jantje. Age: 2 years



Left to Right: Renee and Isabella. Age: 3 1/2 years.



From left to right: Tlotliso Olivia & Matlotlo Talia Ralefeta. Age: 4 years



From left to right: Ryleigh and Maya, 19 months



From left to right: Tom and Jack. Age: 6 years



From left to right: Luhan & Janru le Roux. Age: 5 years



From left to right: Alyssa and Zoey. Age: 6 years



From left to right: Skye and Shannon Ludbrook



first family trip - how to cope

Travelling for the first time as a new family can be daunting, it presents its own set of challenges but this doesn't mean your holiday can't be fun. Most family holidays take place when the babies are around 6 to 8 months of age.

Anxiety sets in when mom starts thinking about the combination of a strange environment, different beds, new faces and new sounds.

Would this over stimulate the babies and possibly even effect their sleep routine? There is no solid answer to this but what most moms of twins will say is that they and their children had a blast and it all worked out.

Some tips to make the weekend getaway fun:

- * Take camp cots, your babies should be used to them if you use them at home.
- * Stick to the same routine you use at home.
- * Take some familiar smells like their favourite teddy bear and same linen you use at home.

- * For road travel try and travel during nap time and take pit stops when they wake up.
- * If you are flying give them a lolly to suck on. Or else they can suck on a dummy or bottle during take off and landing.
- * Feed them just before check in so that they are content
- * When flying it's easier to carry them in a carrier and use a back pack for a nappy bag. This leaves you with free hands.
- * Carry an extra set of clothes for yourself when flying incase one of the babies throws up.
- * Try to avoid packing electronics into the nappy bag, you will need to take them out at security.
- * Don't over think, there is only so much planning that you can do.
- * Bring enough food, you are allowed to carry on prepared formula once it has been checked.
- * Carry all documents like passports,

birth certificates etc in one plastic folder that is easy to reach.

- * Give yourself loads of extra time, your children pick up on your stress and the unforeseen can happen. Check in can be delayed, they may need to have nappy changes, they could loose their favourite toy and so the list goes on.
- * Share the work load with whoever you are travelling with. You don't need to be a super mom or super dad. Its the start of a holiday and everyone needs to enjoy it .
- * Don't keep the children confined to sitting places, let them run around in the airport in play areas so that they can burn some energy.
- * Make use of the airport / air line strollers that are provided.
- * Request the front seats with extra leg room and where the carry cots fit for babies especially for long distance flights.
- * Flexibility is key to a good holiday.



TWIN LOVE

Can you love your twin more than anyone else and still make room for other significant relationships? An ashamed female patient recently asked if loving her twin more than her children and husband was inappropriate. I have personally interacted with many twin pairs who forthrightly acknowledge that their connection far surpasses all other intimate bonds. Why are some pairs able to live comfortably with this dynamic while others feel conflicted?

Generally speaking, I believe the distinguishing factor is the degree to which the twins emotionally rely on one another without expecting exclusivity. The female pairs I know who achieve this happy medium are content with their twin and with their partners. They experience reciprocity with their significant others while seeking out their twin for validation, solace, and advice in areas where they are reluctant to confide in others. Their significant, satisfying, and sacrosanct shared history evokes a profound connection not commonly experienced with different-age siblings.

On the other hand, the adult female twins who cannot juggle a healthy balance between their sister and their significant others often find themselves disappointed and enraged with loved ones who cannot meet their emotional needs. In these unhappy circumstances, one or both twins feel disillusioned and emotionally abandoned by their nontwin intimates. In an unrealistic quest to replicate the closeness of their twinship, they frequently discover that no one can live up to the real or imagined fulfillment provided by their sibling. Feeling misunderstood and longing for an idealized connection, the twins yearn to return to one another to find the unconditional love, acceptance, and understanding that they perceive as missing.

I have counseled many twins caught in this conundrum. Settling for what one knows rather than seeking out new ways of relating is often easier. When a patient is willing to reflect on the function the twin bond played during childhood, she can evaluate how the present connection with her sister either enhances or cripples her longing for healthy intimacy with others. By successfully navigating the past and honestly assessing the present, she can gauge how healthy the twinship really is.

Image is in the public domain courtesy of Lynda A from Flickr

Article written by Joan Friedman

<https://www.joanafriedmanphd.com/twin-love/>





TO BUY OR NOT TO BUY?

First time moms spend many sleepless nights going over their shopping lists while tossing and turning in bed. There are so many products on the market it can be mind boggling as to what is an essential item and what is a luxury.

These are some tips from moms who have already had twins and triplets. What they couldn't live without and what they would have happily gone without. Don't rush out and buy two of everything, rather stagger the buying, maybe one twin will use the item and the other will refuse or won't need it.

Can't live without

- * Baby carrier
- * Good routine
- * Maclaren side by side pram
- * Tommy Tippee steam blender
- * Chelino bath station with a changing section. Saves on the back pain
- * Joie stage car seats that can be used from birth until 5 years
- * Two highchairs
- * Two bouncers
- * Babyvac humidifier and nebuliser
- * Baby walkers
- * Snuz hero
- * Baby wrap like a Snuggleroo
- * Burp clothes
- * Taglet for sleep time
- * Love to dream sleeping bag
- * Pigeon 100% pure water wet wipes
- * Twin feeding pillow
- * Double sized play pen (a sanity saver as they start moving around)
- * Electric breast pump

Not necessary but nice to have

- * Expensive pram. They are cumbersome to move around, fold up, fit in the car and so on.
- * Wooden cot AND camp cot. Only one is needed.
- * Baby monitor, this depends on the style of the home (don't always work in double storey homes) this item is debatable though. Many moms say "yes" to them and many say "no"
- * Expensive baby swings
- * Electric baby formula mixer
- * Newborn and 0 - 3 months baby clothes. Minimal is needed as they grow so quickly.

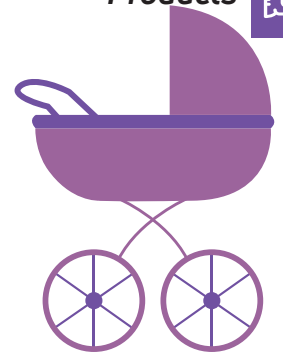
- * No need for fancy branded shoes for the first year.
- * Carry cots
- * Toddler beds when you can go straight to single beds
- * Bumbo chairs, some babies are rather chubby and they also out grow them quickly.

Find what works for you. Each home is different and babies all have different needs. It would come down to personal preferences, affordability and living circumstances. At the end of the day you need to do what is best for you and your babies.





which PRAM suits ME?



Choosing a pram can be a daunting task. In my opinion a solid pram that is multifunctional will be good value for money. However when buying the pram there is a lot to take into consideration. There are so many expensive prams being sold second hand looking almost brand new. Don't rush the purchase, think of your lifestyle and what you do most, if you are not sporty, don't buy a jogger. We don't live in Europe so we don't need a rain cover. We also use our prams most often in shopping malls, we don't walk to the malls, use public transport or have unusual weather conditions. So with these imported prams be careful of the sales pitch being put forward. Do you want a side by side or Tandem? Think about if you want your

babies to interact with each other as they get older (and pull items off the shop shelves) or do you want them one behind the other and you rotate who has a turn in front to have your undivided attention. Also look at shopping isles and fitting through them and the security at the entrance to shops. Next thought to ponder, is your car boot big enough? If you have a small car, it is not recommended that you buy a bulky pram. Remember you still need to fit the grocery shopping around it. The choices are endless, these are some of the most recommended prams by out twin parents

1 Double Trouble Twin Pram



- 6 months to 3½ years
- Lightweight & Compact
- Travel system with car seats



2 Noola Duo Travel System



- Birth to 3½ years
- Compact with Forward and rearward facing
- Carrycot and Car seat change system



3 Thule Urban Glide 2 Double



- Lightweight all Terrain Stroller
- Door passthrough: 80cm
- One handed compact fold



4 Preg Perego Duett



- Reversible seats
- Up to 36 months
- Made in Italy



5 Bugaboo Donkey 3 Duo



- Fits through standard doorways (60cm width)
- Lightweight
- Birth to 3½ years



6 Baby Jogger City Select



- Compact
- Multiple recline options
- Not intended for jogging



7 Chicco Echo Twin Stroller



- Easy mobility
- Quick Fold down
- Adjustable leg support



8 Maxi Cosi Dana for 2



- Easy to maneuver
- fits through standard size doorways
- Stands when folded



9 Graco Duo Glider



- Extremely lightweight
- Well priced
- Accepts 2 Graco car seats





MIRACLE TWINS

On Friday the 25 September 2020 there was great excitement at the house of Ally, owner of 4akid, in WendyWood.

One of her staff, Cynthia who was 7 months pregnant with twins started to feel unwell. At around 12h30 she went into labour. The staff were on lunch when one of the ladies came to Ally saying that Cynthia had pains in her back and her stomach. She could barely walk.

After half an hour of calling for help there were still no paramedics. During this time Cynthia said she could feel she needed to push. Fortunately everyone has been CPR trained in the house because of Ally's special needs child.

Eventually a paramedic arrived but she needed more help. The Jewish organisation Hatzollah sent paramedics within 10 minutes and they took over the delivery.

The first baby to arrive was the little girl and about 20 minutes later the little boy arrived he needed oxygen. They were in separate sacs and the placentas were separate but joined together.

The paramedics left around 16h30. They left in two ambulances. The little boy was in an incubator in the ER24 ambulance and Cynthia and the little girl were in the Hatzollah ambulance. Both organisations helped her free of charge because the government organisations couldn't help, saying they had no ambulances. She was taken to the Johannesburg General hospital.

Both babies weighed approximately 1kg each, they didn't weigh them at the delivery because it had been an emergency situation.





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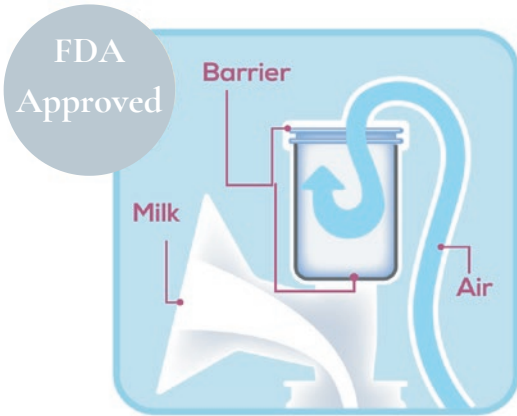
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Spring 2020 **19** multiple seasons

A FATHERS STORY

Before I tell my story, I would like to state that I am writing this for all fathers, whether you have been through something similar or not, but just to let you know in this world we live in where "macho" is something we are all supposed to be associated with, that it is actually ok to feel, to cry and know that there are other guys out there that have your back.

It was always my dream to have a son of my own, so on Christmas Day of 2011 when my wife Taryn, told me she was pregnant, my dreams were coming true. Fast forward three weeks we had our first gynae appointment to check the news was true, but the Dr told us we were having TWINS – then he looked up at us and said something I will remember for the rest of my life, "YOU NOT GOING TO BELIEVE IT, BUT THERE IS ANOTHER ONE IN THERE".

So here we were, pregnant with natural triplets within one month of trying to have "one baby". Weeks flew by, we tried to get our heads around having three babies and how we would actually manage this, logistically and financially.

Our 16 week visit to the gynae, a day I will never forget as we were going to find out the sex of our babies. To my joy, we were having three boys, two identical and one single. My dreams were coming true, I nearly had my very own 5-a-side football team.

At 5 months Taryn was well and truly pregnant and put on bed rest to best manage her complicated pregnancy. Just before midnight on Tuesday, 22 May 2012, Taryn woke me up saying her water had broken. We rushed to the hospital where the doctor put our minds at rest. Telling us they'd keep Taryn in hospital until delivery, however with the right medication the boys would stay safely in mom's tummy for 10 weeks if not longer, or so we thought.

Taryn was only 25 weeks pregnant,

way too early and we had to do whatever it took to keep the babies safe. Taryn's water broke again on Thursday and the contractions started, but we were told not to worry as they'd do everything they could to keep the boys in.

Friday, 25 May 2012, a day I will never forget!! The contractions were getting worse and Taryn was in pain. The gynae came to see Taryn and confirmed the boys were on their way. Within an hour we were in theatre and Christian Adam Brooke, Alex DeMontalt Brooke and Dale Cress Brooke were born.

Christian, our singleton weighed 980g, Alex 860g and Dale just a meagre 620g. Everything flashed past and the tiny grey bodies of the boys were whipped into little plastic bags, their eyes were covered and they were whisked away to Neo Natal ICU, leaving Taryn and I in the theatre waiting to be wheeled back to the maternity ward.

Hours passed without news, until I couldn't take it anymore and walked to the ICU where I was greeted by our paed who gave me the whirlwind tour to see the boys who were so tiny, helpless and had tubes coming out of everywhere.

Six hours after the boys had been born I was allowed to go and see my sons properly for the first time. I don't think anything I had ever been through up to this point in my life had prepared me for what I was about to experience.

Let me say it outright, I would never wish the Neo-Natal ICU on my worst enemy.

The Dr introduced me to my boys and explained, in what could only be translated as gibberish, what the scenario was with them. The prognosis wasn't positive, Dale being the strongest and Christian and Alex in a critical state.

Day 2 went by spending our time in

the ICU, trying to process this totally surreal situation. It was time for me to take Taryn home, and with a huge tug on our hearts we prepared to go home leaving our tiny little boys in the ICU, feeling completely helpless and not essentially knowing what to do. As soon as we had got home, we agreed to rather head back to the hospital for the rest of the day.

Dale had taken a turn for the worse and we were told that he would require an operation on his digestive system as it had not formed correctly, but there were concerns about a Grade 3 brain bleed. On the morning of Day 5, my phone rang with a number that I didn't recognize so I didn't answer it, then Taryn's phone rang with the same number. My heart skipped a beat and I knew this was not good. I answered and it was our paed who told me that Dale had progressed to a Grade 4 brain bleed and that we must come to the hospital immediately. Left frozen, I now had to tell Taryn that our tiny little baby boy was about to leave us and go to a much happier place.

We arrived at the hospital and were taken straight to Dale's bed where our paed explained the situation and asked us if we wanted to switch his ventilator off, which would result in Dale slowly but painlessly passing away. We had already agreed that if this was going to happen to any of our boys, we would let them go, as what life would they have lived and what strain would this have put on our other three children. As the nurses prepared to switch off the ventilators they picked up Dale to let us hold him and our tiny little boy passed away in our arms.

Dale Cress Brooke passed away on Wednesday, 30 May 2012, 5 days old. I constantly think now, "why didn't I spend more time at the hospital, why didn't I spend more time at his bedside, what else could I have done to have made sure that Dale survived". The simple answer is nothing, and that for a man is incredibly hard to bare. A



small memorial service was held for Dale on the Friday and then he was later cremated.

Christian and Alex were still very much in ICU and by no means out of the woods. Sitting next to their beds all day every day and watching them drink the 1ml of milk per feed, both Taryn and I felt completely helpless. It was almost as if the entire outside world had no idea what we were going through and that only those within the confines of those four walls could comprehend this situation.

Christian and Alex continued to grow, their feeds went up and they started to hit their milestones. The boys moved out of ICU and into High Care and then after 101 days at Sandton Medi-Clinic Alex came home with us. Two days later Christian followed his brother home. The doctors and nurses had warned us that their immune systems wouldn't be as strong as other babies of their age and that we should expect to be back in hospital often until the boys reached 3 - 4 years old. To date I can honestly say that the boys have never been back in, other than for the

usual problems such as grommets, tonsils etc.

Christian and Alex are now 8 years old and absolutely perfect, and for that we can only thank the Lord for the blessings that they are. So finishing off where I started, dads, please know that it is ok to cry, it is ok to show emotion and teach your sons the same....it can only make us stronger.

<https://demontalt4.wixsite.com/website>





TWINS

from a mother of twins



From emotions to physical ... how to birth, how to feed, how to care for two and all the other usual mom topics. It gets so overwhelming when it comes to twins.

When we first found out we were expecting twins, we were ecstatic. It was a dream come true for both my husband and I, but we never imagined that day at 9 weeks pregnant, what exactly was waiting for us. I had an amazing water birth, something a lot of people say wasn't possible. We searched high and low till we found a midwife willing to deliver twins at a home birthing centre, where our babies were born, three hours from home.

Life with twins is definitely a huge blessing, you get to see things singleton parents never do and you see a bond, so very special and unique. From the very first time I tandem fed them, they held hands. They are 3 years old and still, whenever we give one a biscuit, he will not walk away before he has a biscuit for his brother. They always have each other's back, always sharing and loving, even kissing each other's "eina's". Don't get me wrong, they are still kids, they do fight too!

Being a mom of twins taught me a lot, I learnt about strengths I never had, and learnt patience and multi-tasking on a different level. My hands are always full and my heart even fuller. I had an amazing water birth, something a lot of people say wasn't possible, I searched high and low till I found a midwife willing to catch our babies in the water, three hours from home, I birthed them. I breastfed for four months when I finally just gave up, it was very hard to breastfeed and I did not know a lot about breastfeeding and did not do enough research. It was so overwhelming, but it was a surviving mechanism for me, to bottle feed. We then had the twins on Nan Optipro

with Munchkin Latch bottles sleeping in separate cribs from four months. They were also on Nexium for reflux and both suffered from colic. Who would have ever thought I'd have colic babies? Not me, no. You don't expect these things. As a first time mom, your thoughts about what a mother is, is so different...then you become a mom... it kind of hits you like a bucket of ice water, it wakes you up.

At five and a half months we started solids, looking back I wish we had waited and also wish we had started with veggies. They are both very picky eaters now, but it's getting better.

We transferred them to single beds with a safety first rail at the age of 22 months, when Renier started climbing out of his camping cot. All these decisions were very hard to make, but we did what we thought was best. There is, and will always be difficult decisions to make as parents, but especially because of having multiples and the huge difference in personality, it just makes those decisions even harder, but we wouldn't have it ANY other way.

I make sure to research through reliable sources (mom groups on facebook doesn't count, but sometimes those help too) before we make decisions that can have a life-long effect on our twins.

If I can give parents expecting twins any piece of advice, it would definitely be

- * Cuddle your babies as much as you can.
- * Accept and ASK for help when you need it, it's okay to not cope on your own, but if you have to believe in yourself.
- * Routine is key.
- * The first year is the hardest, but it is the one you will miss the most.
- * Take photos and videos as much as possible

There is so much you need to understand and have to learn and cope with, in the first year, be open, but do trust your gut. You're the mom, you know best. You are their world, but also know there are professionally trained people for a reason.

As a teenager I use to judge those moms whose 3 year olds were on bottles or pacifiers, now I'm that mom and now I know, survival is key, sanity is the most important, as well as sleep. I don't judge, but rather guide friends because we're all learning. Whether you have 1 or 4 kids, you face hard decisions, you have to make choices and you have to be, the best parent you can be.

Enjoy the journey, the days are long but the years are short! Raising them is definitely a roller coaster ride but with the help of my loving husband we will raise strong men. We are very thankful to be blessed with twins. Being the parents of Renier & Rynhardt is absolutely amazing. They are the best gift ever and the past 3 years and 2 months have been the most memorable ones ever. They are our story to tell. The reason to wake up.

"To the world you are one person, but to your child you are the world"



**Hendrina Engelbrecht**

September 2 at 13:11 PM

**Both my 5 year old twin boys are left handed!
Anyone whose twins are also??**

Cher Joubert My b/g twins are only 18 months but it looks like my son favours his left hand and my daughter her right hand.

Bianca Morrison My twins are 5, my son is right handed and my daughter use both hands, she sometimes sits and colours in 2 different pictures at the same time using both hands

Olga Loseva Bianca Morrison this is so Awesome, she using both part of the brains equally. Must be super smart

Bianca Morrison Olga Loseva she amazes me every time she does it, she is a clever one, but her brother is also very clever when it comes to building puzzles, I gave him a 70 piece puzzle and he built it in 10min without having the picture of the puzzle with him (only had a look at the picture) and it was the first time building it

Olga Loseva Bianca Morrison this is awesome! My older son like this, he can do any puzzle on his own with no picture very quick.

Bianca Morrison Olga Loseva same with my son, it's amazing how smart the kids are

Tanya Scop My one girl is right handed other is left handed.

Annemie Stoop DeWet My one girl is left handed, and the other right handed

Nicky Ingham Charlton Mine are both lefties as well

Hendrina Engelbrecht Author **Nicky Ingham Charlton** it looks very funny...and man the colouring is a mess

Nicky Ingham Charlton I am a lefty as well, the eating :-\

Anlie Fourie 5 yr olds boys. One left handed and other right handed

Wilma Richter 1 left and 1 right

Molebogeng Poppy Moloantwa Mosito My 8 year old boys both left handed

Hendrina Engelbrecht Author **Molebogeng Poppy Moloantwa Mosito** thats awesome...how did they learn to write? Do they also turn the paper? It looks very uncomfy! ohhh man and the colouring is a mess

Molebogeng Poppy Moloantwa Mosito Hendrina Engelbrecht the other one struggled, but now they perfect doing Grade 2

Corlia van Biljon One lefty and other ones right handed

Kelly Wilson My husband and I are both lefties but our twins are both right handed, it makes helping them draw and write awkward but hilarious

Martie Bester Only one of my 4 kids (2 x twins) is lefthanded. I expected more to be, as 2 of my 4 brothers are also lefthanded, and there is a notion (proven yet?) that lefthandedness is more prevelant amongst multiples/twins...

Rolandi Brenkman Me, husband and both twins are lefthanded. Only our eldest son is right handed in our house.

Maruschka En Dennis Byrne Boy right and girl left, both parents right. No one in family left handed.

Marelize Lewis Stoltz I'm left handed. Lots of left handed family both sides. Singleton right handed. Twin girl right boy left....

Jennifer Ngandu Mine started off as left and the other right but now they're 6 yrs and both want to use left hand. But one looks so awkward when he holds a pencil to write and still uses right leg to kick a soccer ball. I don't know what to do.

Carmen Wendy Rouquette Girl left, boy right

Marlize Van Rooyen 1 left 1 right

Adri Van Zyl I've read that identical twins are usually mirror images of each other so if the one is right handed the other is left

Brenda MaNkosi Cassia My 4 year old B/G twins are also left-handed.... Me too

Janine Northcott My one is left handed and my other is ambidextrous

Hendrina Engelbrecht Author **Janine Northcott** ohhh wow! One of mine also does that sometimes...but then switch to left again! They both kick a ball with the left foot aswell

Janine Northcott Hendrina Engelbrecht what i think happened is that the one was naturally right handed but tried to copy his brother who is left handed and has resulted in him becoming ambidextrous. Rather interesting to see.

Elmien Fletcher 5 year old identical triplets, 1 left handed

Vashnee Naidoo My two 9 year old identical

boys are. Just like mum

Angelique Van Staden My girls left handed

Hendrina Engelbrecht Author **Angelique Van Staden** ek kry hulle half jammer...dit lyk vir my baie ongemaklik...die inkleur is natuurlik n moerse gemors

Angelique Van Staden Hendrina Engelbrecht jip dit is maar ek is ook links. So sukkel ons maar saam saam

Janice Pearlman I have triplets and two of my kids are left handed. Strange as the rest of us are right handed

Ronel Jordaan Arnold My twins are both right- handed. I'm left handed.

Lynda Potgieter My twin boys, one left handed and one right handed. My brother is left handed and my dad was ambidextrous. My husband and I are both right handed and so is our daughter.

Katy Louise Bailey Both left handed girls, my other children are right handed as are hubby and I

Hendrina Engelbrecht Author **Katy Louise Bailey** thats awesome...how old are they?

Stefanie Ross Cantzler My one is and my other is still ambi but tends to the left hand. Have many lefties in my family and I am ambidextrous myself. I prefer to write with my right but many crafting activities, brushing teeth, hair is with my left.

Eloise Marais Just my 1. Identical

Puleng Lesolle Maithufi I have triplets 1boy and 2girls. The Boy he's right handed and the girls are left handed.

Oneida Van Wyk I have identical twins. One is right handed the other one is left handed

Dea Oosthuizen Muller Girl left boy right

Suzanne-Mari van Zyl My twin boys - one left handed and one right handed.

Amor Herbst 1 left and 1 right

Write a comment...





OUR STORY of tears, hope & faith

We had our very first BFP (big fat positive) pregnancy test in November 2007. We were over the moon as it happened fairly quickly after we started trying to conceive. Imagine our shock when it turned out to be a twin pregnancy! I had an easy pregnancy with no complications, a few aches and pains but that was normal with twin pregnancies. My husband was elated when it turned out to be identical baby boys.

Around 27 and a half weeks, I had the weird feeling something was wrong. I did not feel the boys moving much and something was just off. We had to be in Pretoria on 5 May 2008, and my sister in law's brother was a GP there and agreed to do a scan for us to help put my mind at ease. I've had enough scans to know that something was wrong, and when he left the room to call his colleague, I just knew. I broke down, my heart was shattered. How do you handle something like that? I was referred to a gynae at Unitas Hospital and a c-section was done that same night and our boys were stillborn.

That night I woke up and found my husband crying next to my bed. I don't know what broke my heart more, losing our boys or seeing my hero and my rock crying. At that moment we named our boys Karlo & Kean Olivier. We had a church service and till this day I cannot remember much, we kind of just floated that day. Our families and friends were amazing and so supportive but we struggled with the loss. I remember friends announcing pregnancies after that, and I would break down in the shower more than once cause it did not feel fair. In February 2009 we got pregnant again, we were ecstatic, things will get better and the pain a little better. Less than 2 weeks later I miscarried. Have you ever had that feeling that you are already on the ground and nothing can knock you lower? Well it can, and we went there.

In this time I found an amazing support forum, Our Precious Moments. The ladies on there were in the same boat, they became more than friends, they became family. We supported each other through all the heartbreak of trying to get pregnant, and the losses too. The Lord had other plans for us, and we had to wait a few years for our little rainbow baby, Luhan, who was born in November 2012. The most beautiful little thing I have even seen, and I cried so much after he was born because he was healthy and alive, something I did not think I would ever experience at one stage.

2 weeks before Luhan's first birthday, Marius (my husband) had some problems and he was admitted to the Urology Hospital in Pretoria. He went into the theatre so the specialist could try and find out what was going on.

After the procedure the specialist informed me he removed a cancerous tumour from my husband's bladder. Shock and denial set in, CANCER??? Little did we know the Lord was not finished with us, because the very next day we found out we were pregnant again. Devastating news with amazing news the next day, this helped us to work through the shock a little bit easier. Divan was born in July 2014, another beautiful little baby boy.

In my heart I always wanted 3 kids, but Marius felt we were done. My heart longed for a little girl, although I knew we were so blessed already as some of my Our Precious Moments friends still struggled and their arms were empty.

In February 2017 I had an inkling to do a pregnancy test, we hadn't tried but I wasn't on any birth control. It was positive! I've had so many negative tests over the years I was expecting it to be negative again so it was a bit of a shock. My 2 friends started joking it was going to be twins again, I laughed it off, I mean what are the chances again? At our 6 weeks scan, I told my doctor that my friends joked it was twins, and she looked at the monitor and asked me if I saw what she saw. I told her to look again as I saw TWO babies. We just started laughing, and we didn't stop the rest of the day, we phoned all our family and we just giggled. This was the last thing we ever expected! Statistically it happens only once in 10 000 pregnancies. My gynae was extremely caring and helpful and took amazing care of me, and our twins were born on 7 October 2017, little girl Leila, and another boy Duardt.

Our road has been long and hard, and we did lose some faith along the way. After we lost the twins in 2008, a friend told me the Lord will bless us with double our loss. At that stage we shrugged it off as the pain was just too much. But look at us now, we LITERALLY have double what we lost! Our lives are crazy, busy, wild and chaotic but we won't change a thing. Never lose hope and faith! We probably will never understand why we had to go through the pain, but I know we grew and we did learn to slow down and stop forcing things, just let go and let God!



Karlo & Kean Olivier



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BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER PREGNANCY

Reference: 1. Impact Rx. Script data (Vitamins & Minerals / Constructed class). MAT Dec 2019.

Proprietary name and dosage form: PregOmega[®] Plus Tablets and Soft Gel Capsules. Composition: Each fish oil soft gel capsule contains: 822 mg Pharmaceutical Grade Fish Oil (derived from tuna and deep marine fish oil) providing: 260 mg DHA, 91 mg EPA. Each calcium tablet contains: 500 mg Calcium, 400 IU Vitamin D3 and 125 mg Magnesium. Each multivitamin & mineral tablet contains: 2 666 IU Vitamin A, 3 mg Vitamin B1, 2 mg Vitamin B2, 10 mg Vitamin B3, 1 mg Vitamin B6, 2 µg Vitamin B12, 50 mg Vitamin C, 100 IU Vitamin D3, 230 mg Calcium, 0,15 mg Copper (AAC), 500 µg Folic Acid, 15 mg Iron (AAC), 0,5 mg Magnesium, 0,05 mg Manganese (AAC), 0,025 mg Molybdenum (AAC), 0,84 mg Potassium, 0,085 mg Zinc. Complementary Medicine: Health Supplement. This unregistered medicine has not been evaluated by SAHPRA for its quality, safety or intended use. Name and business address: iNova Pharmaceuticals (Pty) Ltd. Co. Reg. No. 1952/001640/07, 15E Riley Road, Bedfordview. Tel. No. 011 087 0000. www.inovapharma.co.za. Further information is available on request from iNova Pharmaceuticals. For more information, speak to your healthcare professional. IN1048/19

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