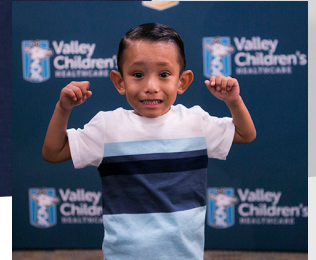


# Tyson



“Words cannot express our gratitude. The Valley Children’s team is what helped us make it through a very frightening time.”

-Katie, Tyson’s mom



Weighing less than an unopened soda can and one of the tiniest babies born in the world, Tyson Perez was fortunate just to survive. Born at 24 weeks’ gestation weighing only 12.7 ounces, Tyson is living proof that even those as vulnerable as he was have a winning chance. Today, Tyson is 10 years old and loves playing baseball.

The little boy’s difficult journey began in the womb. An ultrasound at 19 weeks showed Tyson developing incorrectly. His mom’s diagnosis of preeclampsia, a potentially life-threatening disorder, compounded the situation. “Some suggested we terminate the baby,” Katie said sadly. “We didn’t want to make that choice.”

When Katie’s blood pressure soared and her platelets dropped rapidly, the baby was delivered by cesarean section and immediately transferred to Valley Children’s Level IV NICU. “He was a beautiful sight,” Matt said of his son’s birth on August 30, 2011.

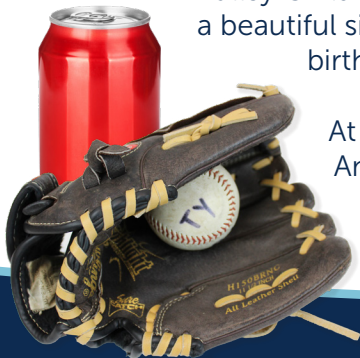
At the time, of the 7,500 American babies born annually weighing less than a pound,

only about 10% survived, even with advanced medical care. A baby with Tyson’s characteristics stood only a 7% chance of survival without severe impairment, according to national preterm birth outcome data.

“It’s vital these preemies receive specialized care within that time frame,” Valley Children’s Chief of Newborn Medicine Dr. Jeffrey Pietz said. “Otherwise, it’s usually too late. The fact that Tyson survived and without any major comorbidities is remarkable.”

Weighing nine pounds by March 2012, Tyson was ready to leave Valley Children’s. He became part of a rare group when he went home. Pediatric specialists continue to monitor Tyson’s progress, including pediatricians who provide complex primary care at Valley Children’s.

Katie and Matt are proud of Tyson Matthew Perez and say his name fits him – but not in the way people might think. “He’s not named after the fighter Mike Tyson,” Matt explained, himself a mixed martial arts (MMA) fighter. “Tyson means ‘high-spirited’ and Matthew, ‘gift of God.’ We think that’s perfect.”



*Futures Worth Fighting For.*