

A story of hope: Ellie

I wanted to share my happy ending after miscarriage story to give others hope, because I know the pain of losing a baby and the fear of never having one only too well. The Miscarriage Association and Trying Again Facebook groups helped me to feel less alone when friends and family were unhelpful and insensitive, and it seemed like everyone I knew was having babies and showing off bumps except me.

I found out I was pregnant in November 2011, after my husband and I had only been trying a few months. We were thrilled but nervous - we decided not to tell anyone until after the twelve week scan. I had a bit of bleeding every now and again but scans reassured us all was well and the heartbeat was strong.

On 3rd January 2012 we went for our 12 week scan. I knew something was wrong when the sonographer was looking at the screen and taking measurements for what felt like hours and not saying anything. Eventually my worst fears were confirmed when she said quietly "I'm very sorry but there's no heartbeat", the baby had died between 9 and 10 weeks. I felt like I was floating outside my body in a nightmare. We were ushered into a tiny private room and given the options of miscarriage management and heartbreakingly given back the £3 we had paid for the scan photos which we had hoped to give our families as our happy announcement.

We walked past all the pregnant women clutching their successful scan photos on the way out and I cried all the way home and then for the most part of the next week until going into hospital overnight to have the pessary and tablets and "pass the products of conception". I was gutted and my husband didn't know how to react to me - we argued and felt miserable for months. I wasn't myself for a long time.

In the next year I was on a rollercoaster of emotions and my body went crazy... I bled for four months after the miscarriage and it really got me down because we couldn't try again so the GP put me on the waiting list for a scan of my womb and ovaries and to see a specialist fertility gynaecologist. My periods returned in June 2012 and they were very painful and long cycles with bleeding in between.

I had my scheduled scan in August and they told me they could see what was probably a 5 week pregnancy, so to go home and do a test to see whether it was viable or not - it was negative, a chemical pregnancy. In the Autumn the gynaecologist diagnosed me with polycystic ovaries and told me I'm much more likely to miscarry than other women - she put me on Metformin to balance things out and Clomid to help healthy ovulation and told me to get on with trying. I felt really negative and my skin went crazy. What got me through was acupuncture - it rebalanced and relaxed me and made me realise I needed to be patient.

In January 2013 I reached a turning point - the anniversary of the awful 12 week scan - something just clicked and I felt like myself again and could even cope better with pregnant friends etc. In March I took the fifth of the six cycles of clomid as well as herbs from my acupuncturist, and my husband and I decided if we hadn't conceived after the sixth cycle, we would adopt because it was all too hard. That decision must have helped me relax because I did my routine pregnancy test in April before starting clomid number 6, and was shocked it was positive.

We didn't get excited, just apprehensive. I was worried about everything throughout the pregnancy even despite healthy scans and feeling my baby moving, and a few episodes of bleeding and a night

in hospital being diagnosed with threatened miscarriage convinced me it would all end in tears. Even late in the pregnancy I was anxious the baby would be stillborn.

In fact our little boy arrived on his due date after I was induced and I'm still shell-shocked but delighted he's here six weeks later. I'm always checking he's still breathing when he's quiet for a while, and now I have a whole host of new worries and joys - life isn't easy for us women.

Along the way in my birthing class I met women having their first babies late into their forties and discovered so many different stories - one friend I made had had seven years of trying and early miscarriage and conceived with IVF - their rainbow son arrived on Christmas morning and she's over the moon.

Please don't ever give up hope and remember for every bump and new mother you see, there may be a difficult journey behind them and they have got to the other side of it – hopefully you can too!