

British medics let sick baby die after court ruling

March 21 2009

A seriously ill baby boy in Britain died Saturday, the day after his parents lost a legal battle to force doctors to keep him alive.

The [parents](#) wanted medics to keep treating their son -- who had a [rare metabolic disorder](#), was brain damaged and had suffered [respiratory failure](#) -- but [doctors](#) said he had no prospect of recovery and was in [intolerable pain](#).

A hearing at the [Court](#) of Appeal in London Friday to resolve the dispute backed the doctors although judges voiced the "deepest sympathy" for the mother and father of the nine-month-old boy.

The parents, who can only be identified as Mr and Mrs T due to a court order, released a statement through lawyers saying their son, named only as OT, died soon after 1000 GMT Saturday after doctors withdrew treatment.

"During his short time with us, OT became the focus of our lives," they said.

"We were present during his last moments, together with O's extended family.

"He died peacefully. We will miss him greatly and wish to say that we are proud to have known our beautiful son for his brief life."

They said Friday they were "deeply distressed" by the ruling and that their son would on Saturday be taken off the ventilator which was keeping him alive.

"We are and always will be convinced that despite his desperate problems, his life is worthwhile and is worth preserving as long as it is possible to do so without causing him undue pain," they said before he died.

"That was the real argument between us and the doctors -- they think his life is intolerable and that his disability is such that his life has little purpose but we, along with some of the nurses, believed that he experiences pleasure and that he has long periods where he was relaxed and pain-free."

The judges, who also banned naming the hospital involved, said they would give the reasons for their decision at a later date.

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