

California couple welcomes identical triplets

January 22 2014



This photo taken Jan. 17, 2014 released by Miller Children's Hospital Long Beach, shows April and Brad Dooley holding their newly born identical triplets, from left to right, Patrick, Owen and Liam at the Long Beach Memorial, Miller Children's Hospital in Long Beach, Calif. Dooley's three sons were born in roughly 4-minute intervals on Jan.13, 2014 at a combined weight of 14 pounds, 9 ounces. (AP Photo/ Miller Children's Hospital Long Beach)

A California woman has given birth to identical triplets, instantly doubling the size of her family.

April Dooley's three sons were born in roughly 4-minute intervals on Jan. 13, at a combined weight of 14 pounds, 9 ounces (6.6 kilograms), the Orange County Register reported Tuesday. She named them Patrick, Owen and Liam.

Dooley, 42, said she burst into tears when she looked at her first ultrasound and learned she was carrying a trio-to-be.

"My husband said, 'Is that three?' I go, 'Three what?' My husband said, 'three babies,'" she said.

She and her husband, Brad, wanted their 5-year-old daughter Kaitlyn to have a companion at their home in Long Beach. They weren't expecting their family to grow so precipitously.

All three boys are healthy, although Liam required surgery for an intestinal problem. Dooley said the surgeon told her the surgery went well.

The triplets arrived six weeks early, which is common with multiple births.

With infertility treatments and other assisted reproductive technologies, the number of [multiple births](#) has grown greatly since the 1980s, according to the newspaper.

However, the occurrence of naturally conceived identical triplets is extremely rare. Identical siblings are produced when an egg is divided in utero. Fraternal siblings and those from artificial treatments come from different eggs.

The Dooleys didn't use fertility treatments.

"We were trying for one more time," April Dooley told the Register. "I had had two miscarriages. We were just trying one more time to get pregnant."

Despite the rarity, it's the second known set of identical triplets born in California in several months. Abby, Brin and Laurel Hepner were born Nov. 22 at Sutter Memorial Hospital to Hannah and Tom Hepner, of Quincy.

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