

Rare Australian conjoined twins die

May 27 2014

Australian conjoined twins Hope and Faith, who shared a body and skull but had separate brains and identical faces, have died almost three weeks after they were born in Sydney, medical officials said Tuesday.

The girls, who were born six weeks early by emergency caesarean, were with their parents—Renee Young and Simon Howie—when they passed away, the Nine television network reported.

"It is with great sadness that we share this news with you," said the broadcaster, which has had access to the parents before and after the birth.

Westmead Children's Hospital in Sydney's west, where the sisters were undergoing treatment after their birth in early May, confirmed the deaths but said Young and Howie were not releasing further information.

The [twins](#) suffered from the rare condition diprosopus, where they shared an unusually-shaped skull with duplicated facial features and separate brains joined at the stem. They also shared their limbs and organs.

Howie told Woman's Day magazine in an earlier interview that the "little Aussie fighters" had started developing their own personalities.

"Faith tends to cry a little more, while Hope takes after her mum and likes to sleep a lot," Howie said.

"Faith blows little bubbles and loves sucking her thumb but Hope prefers the dummy."

The couple, who are parents to seven other children, said they could not face terminating their pregnancy despite concerns about the babies' survival.

There have been only 35 cases of diprosopus worldwide, a rare condition where a baby has two faces, Woman's Day said. None of the newborns survived.

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