

Woman with womb transplant hopes to inspire others

October 6 2014, by Maria Cheng



Vincent, the first baby born to a woman who had a womb transplant, is cradled by his mother at an undisclosed location in Sweden, Monday, Oct. 6, 2014. The parents of the baby say they hope they can be an inspiration to others struggling with infertility. After what they describe as a rollercoaster of a journey, the unnamed Swedish couple finally became parents last month, when the mother gave birth to a healthy but premature baby boy. (AP Photo/Ben Jary)

The parents of the first baby born from a transplanted womb hope they

can be an inspiration to others struggling with infertility—but that's not why they did it.

After what they describe as a roller-coaster of a journey, the Swedish couple finally became parents last month, when the mother gave birth to a premature but healthy boy. For the couple, who spoke only on condition of anonymity because they don't want their child to become a target of publicity, making history was an afterthought.

"Yes, we're the first to do this, but that's not the important thing," the mother told The Associated Press during an interview at her home, on condition that the exact location not be revealed.

The important thing, she said, was that she has given birth to a son, more than two decades after being told that was medically impossible.

"We've been through so many things I couldn't control, but now that this little fantastic boy is here I just feel relieved," she said.

As for the inspiration: "I want people to know that what they think is impossible can happen."

To mark their baby's birth as a victory over their difficult journey to parenthood, they named him Vincent, which means "to conquer."

The mother cradled her sleeping baby in a spotless, stylish two-story house where an errant pacifier on the kitchen counter was one of the only clues that a newborn was around.



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She said she still could not believe she is a mother, after discovering at 15 that she had no womb and being told that she would never carry her own children. Now 36, she was one of nine women to receive a transplanted womb last year in a ground-breaking trial led by Dr. Mats Brannstrom, a professor of gynecology and obstetrics at the University

of Gothenburg and Stockholm IVF.

Based in Gothenburg, Brannstrom has patients from all over Sweden, and several of them had received transplants before her. Separately, two other such transplants have been tried, in Saudi Arabia and Turkey.

So the new mother in Sweden said she never thought she might be the first to deliver a baby from a transplanted womb.

Her husband said the couple will be forever grateful to the 61-year-old woman who donated her uterus, the mother of one of his best friends. The woman—now the boy's godmother—made the offer after hearing about the difficulties the young couple was having in starting a family.

"What she did for us was so amazing and selfless that the words 'thank you' don't seem like enough," the father said.



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These days, the new parents are busy marveling at their baby's expressive face and remarkably calm nature.

"He doesn't really scream, but he makes these funny little sounds," the mother said, comparing him to a kitten. Though his white wooden crib

has a welcoming teddy bear and blankets, she said her son prefers to sleep between his parents in their bed.

She and her husband said they haven't quite figured out how they will tell their son that he made medical history once he's older.

"We will show him all the articles that were written and tell him everything we went through to get him," she said. "Maybe he will be inspired to become a doctor."

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