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**Chapter Three
Two Months Old,
Heart Banding Surgery**

♥December 16, 2004 at 11:31 AM CST

Hello to All,

Sorry it's been several days since an update, but it's been a little stressful. We have had many talks with the neonatologists and cardiologist this week. We hope to know more of a plan for Blake tomorrow-Friday. We are all meeting tomorrow at 1pm for a patient care conference. (Meeting of the Minds) Yesterday many decisions were made and a plan for the next couple of days regarding Blake's pulmonary hypertension. He is now considered to have severe pul. htn. We are all praying that the meds that were started yesterday will help him in the best way possible. I will be able to share more with all of you tomorrow after the meeting. All the doctors are very pleased with Blake's eating. He is tolerating his feedings very well. I'm so glad he likes my milk.

Yesterday I decided I needed to spend more time with our son, so I will not be working the next few weeks. It seems everyday my life changes, but the most important thing is now to spend as much time possible with Blake. He needs his mommy and daddy. I wanted to thank Dr. Geyer and my co-workers for being soooooooooo understanding. I love each and every one of you. All of you have been very supportive, including the patients. I appreciate all of your concern for Chad, Blake and I. I will try my best to send a message tomorrow after the meeting.

Thank you again,
Kimberly :)

♥December 19, 2004 at 08:08 PM CST

Hello from Mommy & Daddy,

What a roller coaster ride it has been the last several days. Chad & I have been spending day and night at the hospital watching over Blake. Friday the conference went well, we were told the plan for Blake. Apparently Blake had another plan. I guess we should have invited him to the meeting. Just after the meeting the nurse did a blood gas (blood testing electrolytes, pH, Co2, etc). This helps the doctors decide how to manage the ventilator settings, respirator function, etc. It is soooooooooo complicated, I just can't explain it all. It would be very confusing and frustrating for us all.

Anyway, Blake's tests were not good. Many changes and meds were changed and added. He needs to be watched much closer. The pulmonary hypertension has now become severe, so many meds were added on Friday and Saturday. We HOPE and PRAY that the echo tomorrow shows positive results. There is a possibility that he will need surgery to try and correct the pulmonary . hypertension. We are hoping it will NOT have to be done. We do need another miracle. Please help us reach the miracle in continuing to pray with us.

The greatest thing happened today, Blake seems to be improving. We hope that he continues to show us how resilient he can be. Blake's afternoon blood gas (Sun.) has been a shock to everyone, but we are not asking why, just thanking God.

As mentioned above, Blake has another echocardiogram on Mon. We hope to share good news with you. Please remember our miracle boy in

your prayers. He is a beautiful boy and he is waiting patiently to thank you for your help in his journey.

We love you all,

Kimberly, Chad & Blake

P. S. Please go to PrayerforPreemies.com and find a link to our Christmas card. Go to Blake's story page to find the link.

♥ **December 22, 2004 at 11:55 AM CST**

Hello Everyone,

Daddy here with some of the latest news on Blake. The plan that was discussed in our conference Friday was pushed forward dramatically by Blake. We will not be able to wait 2-3 weeks for the heart surgery as was the hope. We are praying that Blake can improve in the next days to get into shape for a surgery early next week.

After a difficult weekend, Blake is somewhat swollen and has been on high oxygen requirements. The doctors need for much of the extra fluid to be relieved, so pee on little boy.... As this fluid comes off, the doctors can prep. him for the heart banding surgery which will help restrict pulmonary blood flow from the heart to the lungs. The lungs are receiving too much pressure and need some relief. The doctors will also rework the PDA clip to fix it permanently. Needless to say all this is complicated by Blake's size. Prayers are needed for the surgical team and doctors as they prepare Blake for this surgery.

Once the surgery is completed, Blake will be transferred to the PICU (Pediatric ICU) for recovery. The PICU receives all the cardiac children and are well prepared and skilled for the recovery needed. The nurses and doctors from the NICU are going to get Blake back after a couple days of recovery, they are glad to hear they will get Blake back for the New Year. The NICU is quite fond of our little boy.

Our son has fought so hard through all of this...and continues to fight daily. Blake, you make us so proud each day....and our love cannot be quantified.

Prayers are playing such a key role in every minute of Blake's life. There have been so many moments when the doctors and nurses have been amazed at how Blake rises from a concerning situation. Please keep this life-support going.... We are forever grateful for everyone's focus and energy leading Blake through all this.

We updated the photo board with some new photos... Santa has been making his rounds early. We love you all and wish a Merry Christmas for your families.

Blake's Daddy,
Chad



♥December 24, 2004 at 09:15 AM CST

Merry Christmas Eve,

Kimberly and I want to wish everyone a wonderful Christmas. We are thankful for being able to stay so close to you all via this Carepage. Our Christmas 'wish' is for Blake to be able to caress you each with a big hug and kiss this coming year. May all your families, weather close or far know your love for each other this holiday season. We are all blessed!!!

Please take a few moments to find Blake's Christmas E-Card. You can find it at www.prayerforpreemies.com/Christmascard.htm Thank you Grandma Johnson for pulling this all together. It is beautiful. If you computer has speakers...turn them up.

Merry Christmas!!!

(It all started with a little baby boy...)

♥December 27, 2004 at 10:44 PM CST

Good evening everyone. This is Aunt Becky here. I know it's been a while since you heard from me, but I've been called into action again. Kimberly called earlier to say that Blake is scheduled for surgery on Wednesday around lunchtime. No, this is not a new development. It has been an issue for some time now but has recently become the most important key to Blake's survival.

If you recall over a month ago, Blake had a procedure to close his PDA. The clamp has since opened enough that the artery is flowing freely again. This puts Blake back at square one in terms of blood flow. Also, the few openings between the ventricles are creating a higher-pressure blood flow than his lungs can handle.

SOOO--- his surgery on Wednesday will be to first, repair the PDA clamp. Second, a Pulmonary Band will be placed on his pulmonary artery to better control the volume and pressure of blood entering his lungs. If you want more specific information on either procedure, visit the following sites: <http://www.texasheartinstitute.org/vseptal.html>
or <http://www.texasheartinstitute.org/pda.html>

The surgery is NOT without risks, but obviously they are worth taking in this case. Once the surgery concludes, Blake will spend time in recovery in the PICU. Pediatric Intensive Care Unit is where ALL children with cardiac conditions recover after surgery. The goal is to spend a few days there and then return to the NICU to continue to feed and grow.

Blake is doing well right now. He actually had a pretty awesome day in terms of Oxygen saturation. His requirements were around 25% FiO₂ and his saturations stayed between 94-98%. When the surgeon came in to visit

with Blake, Kim and Chad this evening, Blake hit 100% saturation. It was almost as if he was trying to tell the doctor, "Hey, I'm ready to go. Let's do this thing!!"

Your prayers are most important to this little guy now. Kim asked specifically for everyone to pray for Blake, Dr. DeWan (the Cardio-Thoractic Surgeon), the NICU Staff, the PICU Staff and all who may have a hand in preparing and caring for Blake. I'd like to make a request that you also pray for Kim and Chad that God will provide them with comfort and strength to continue their loving vigil for their beautiful baby boy.

Until next time-

Aunt Becky

♥December 29, 2004 at 02:21 PM CST

This is Aunt Becky in Austin at 2:00 PM, Little Blake finished surgery. Everything went perfect! Dr. Dewan was pleased. Blake has now been moved to recovery where Mom & Dad can see him in an hour. Please keep praying for his recovery and give thanks to God for the talented doctors, nurses and staff.

More later,

Aunt Becky

♥December 30, 2004 at 10:09 AM CST

What a wonderful NEW day! The Lord has blessed us with so many gifts- especially the gift of Life! Let us give thanks and praise.

Kim and Chad asked me to post an update on Blake for everyone. Uncle Michael and I left the hospital about 6:30pm to return home as the PICU was closing for nursing changes . Blake was stable but still under the effects of the anesthesia. We were all able to visit him for a short time in his new surroundings. Although he looked very peaceful, it still lingered in the back of our minds that he has a hard road of recovery ahead. His doctors expect the first 48 hours to be rough.

What a tumultuous day it was! When we arrived at the hospital around 10:00am, Kim and Chad were preparing to hold their son, not knowing if it would be the last time. Grandparents, Aunts and Uncle Michael were pressed against the glass, hoping, praying and tearfully wishing we could take away their hurt and fear. As the time approached, people began filling Blake's small room to prepare him for travel. What a coordinated effort that was- everyone worked together like a well-oiled machine to make sure the transition was smooth. All the while, Blake maintained a peaceful calm about him as if to tell us all, "Don't worry about me."

Kim and Chad accompanied their son as far as they could before turning him over to the nurses and doctors who would hold his life in their hands. So the vigil began in the PICU waiting room with prayers and light conversation to ease the tension. Blake's nurses from the NICU came be many times to check in and say how much they already missed the little guy. About 12:30 a nurse from the OR called to give an update and all was going well. Time seemed to pass slowly until the next call came in around 2:00 that they were finished with the surgery. Blake was being transported

down the hallway to his new suite and we could see him then. Boy did the emotions run the gamut! Shock, surprise, exhilaration, and finally RELIEF. We all filed into the hallway were one lady commented we looked like a receiving line. We quickly announced, "WE ARE!!"

Blake's surgeon- Dr. DeWan- came by first and gave Kim and Chad a brief overview of the surgery. He said everything went well, Blake's sats were good throughout the entire procedure and he didn't give them any trouble. Then came Blake looking like a little prince lying upon his bed. There is no way to describe the joy in that hallway we all experienced at seeing this little miracle once again. As he was rolled away, Kim and Chad called out to let him know that they were there and that they loved him.

Gosh- I'm making myself cry just reliving those moments and I'm only his aunt. But I guess it really doesn't matter how you have come to know Blake, by relation or by chance, you can't help but be touched by this small messenger from above.

I'll close this chapter today and do my best to keep you updated on Blake's recovery and his prayer needs. Until then keep doing what you've been doing because whatever it is-- IT WORKS!!!

Love and MANY THANKS!!

Aunt Becky

♥December 31, 2004 at 02:56 PM CST

Thank GOD!!! All the PRAYERS ARE WORKING!!!!!! THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS.

Blake had another Abdominal Ultrasound today. The doctors are shocked again. The clot in his aorta has decreased. The clot in his left portal vein (liver) has a small amount of blood flow. Prior to today it was completely blocked. PRAISE GOD. God is there, you just have to look for the signs. Please look for the signs in your own life's journey.

We are still in the PICU, but will be back in the NICU in the next few days?? He is recovering well from the heart surgery. Grandma & Grandpa Johnson took their two grand-dogs to the ranch. The girls need to release some energy and be with their parents. Grandma & Grandpa Kramr and Aunt Michelle left today to enjoy the new year at home. I'm sure cousin Kristen and Brooks miss their mom & grandparents. Blake enjoyed the visit and hopes to see them soon. Aunt Lee Ann, Uncle Jim and buddy Adam came to visit Blake today. They have been in Florida for Christmas. Lee Ann thought Blake looked better than before surgery.

Mommy and daddy hope to enjoy the new year!!!! We will raise our milk glass tonight with Blake. We wish everyone a HAPPY NEW Year!!!! 2005 here we come!!!! We would like to wish Blake's night nurse, LAUREL a Happy Birthday!!! It was yesterday 12/30/04. Blake would love for you to come see him. Blake also wanted to say hello to all the doctors and nurses in the NICU. He will be back soon!!! Thank you for getting him prepared for surgery. You all did a great job. Take care and be safe,

Love,

Kimberly :)

♥ **January 01, 2005 at 09:44 PM CST**

ANOTHER MIRACLE MOMENT!!!!

We enjoyed our New Year's Eve with our little miracle boy, Blake. We had a special moment with him last night. About 11:15 pm he decided to open his eyes for mommy and daddy. He had his eyes open for about 15 min. It was a magical moment. We haven't seen his eyes in about 6 weeks due to all the swelling of his eyelids and sedation. Blake took a catnap and then decided to open them after we toasted the new year. I think he wanted to see the ball drop in times square.

We are hoping Blake will be transferred back to the NICU, Monday or Tuesday. Blake misses all his friends. We are hoping the chest tube will be pulled out tomorrow. We have to wait and see. We will keep you posted.

Have a great 2005!! We plan too!

Love,

Kimberly :)

♥ **January 03, 2005 at 02:42 PM CST**

Happy New Year, All.

Kimberly and I wish you all a wonderful 2005. Blake is definitely continuing his fight to overcome his early arrival into the world. I just got a call from Kimberly and she related that Dr. DeWan has removed the chest tube this afternoon. This tube was placed to relieve fluid and

drainage from around his heart. This is great news... Let's hope that all heals well over the next few days. Blake has been recovering from the surgery in the PICU and will return to the NICU one day soon. Pray for all the doctors and nurses in the NICU...there has been a flood of new premature babies entering the unit over the past few days.

Please pray for all the new babies and their parents as these preemies face many of the same situations Blake has faced.

Oddly enough, Blake has been one of only two or three patients in the PICU. The flu bug has stayed away from many of the kids this winter season. This is good news for everyone.

We have many hurdles ahead of us still, but Blake is showing us all how strong his will to survive is. For that, we are two very amazed parents right now. We love you all,

Thanks be to God.

♥ **January 04, 2005 at 09:09 AM CST**

Good Morning Ya'll,

Hope the transition back to work and school is going well, time to get back to work and start off the New Year. Blake is doing well today, we will have an Echocardiogram this morning to check the progress of the heart since surgery. He had a couple of his episodes last night as has been the case since surgery. As he wakes up from the sedation sometimes, he bears down and tenses up, restricting his lungs from absorbing enough

oxygen...therefore needs to be 'bagged' in order to inflate his lungs and receive the oxygen he needs. This is accompanied by extra drugs to sedate him to relax and accept the assistance. These are hard for mommy and daddy to watch, but are becoming somewhat less frequent it seems. Please pray for improvements in this department, improved lung capacity and restful days.

I've posted a photo from New Year's Eve, as Blake surprised us with by opening his eyes to see the last minutes of 2004...and then again to see the first minutes of 2005. Mommy loves his lips and brown eyes.

Love you all.....

Dad

♥ January 06, 2005 at 07:45 AM CST

Just a quick note to start you off this morning. (This is Aunt Becky by the way.) You can see Kimberly's friend Lee Ann posted a prayer request in the message board yesterday about 5:00pm. Blake did get a central line put in his leg last night to help him get his medications. It isn't exactly what the docs wanted but it'll do. He should be getting his medications again. There is also news of another infection brewing. We don't know what it is yet but Blake has already been started on antibiotics. The lab should give some word today about the "bug" and what meds will work for it. Continue your prayer vigil as Blake passes through more rocky waters.

More as it becomes available-

Aunt Becky

♥ January 06, 2005 at 08:40 AM CST

Good Morning Blake-sters,

Here we start another day...what will it hold for Blake?

Yesterday, Dr. Josephs replaced the blocked central line, his 'life-line' we call it, with a new line near his right groin area. This will be where he gets his medications temporarily until a better line can be surgically placed in the near future. We are so thankful for the skills of these docs, as Blake can continue his fight today towards getting healthier. We should know today more about which antibiotic will be needed to head off this infection that has been identified in his blood.

Blake had a better night, with nurse Janice. They had to help bring his blood sugar down with some insulin, but otherwise he rested all night with no de-sat. episodes. I believe he was quite exhausted from the day's events and just needed to rest. As did Mommy and Daddy.

I left this morning with Kimberly still sleeping. She was dreaming of Blake I'm sure as she was talking in her sleep about 'a dedication' or something. As I hear her, all I can think about is how wonderful a Mommy Kimberly is. She now spends the better part of each day/night by Blake encouraging him to keep up the fight and letting him know how much he is loved. Each day she puts aside her concerns from the day before to start a new positive day for her son. I pray that Mommy will be rewarded for this steadfast vision and selfless support by being able to take Blake home one day and love on him for hours on end. Besides living and breathing Blake each day, Kimberly also finds strength to reach out to other parents going through similar stories and lifting them up with hope.

Where does all this heart come from? I know it comes from her faith in God and support from family. (I love you Kimberly...always.)

Please pray for Mommy today and for strength to keep up this marathon of love for Blake. Thank you all for your thoughts and prayers. More to come...

Daddy

♥ **January 07, 2005 at 08:32 AM CST**

TGIF,

Blake has another struggle ahead of him...as we know he will not give in to these 'bugs'. His infection is getting the better of him at the moment, though for now his vital signs are hanging steady. The infection is causing his vascular system to release fluid and blood throughout his body. His belly is swollen and his skin tone has turned darker (somewhat purple) due to this fluid 'oozing'. A different type of ventilator is being used to give Blake very short rushes of air to breath. This keeps Blake from having to use up energy and strength to breath. To allow this type of ventilation, Blake must be heavily sedated to allow the lungs to just accept the air from the ventilator without breathing over it. Of course Blake has built up quite a tolerance for the drugs, so increased levels are required to keep him still.

The next several days are critical again for Blake's struggle against this infection. Prayers are needed...

The hard part of the matter, is that Blake was showing so much improvement after the heart surgery. Two steps forward, one step back... This little boy continues to amaze his doctors, each of them comments that for many other babies these hurdles could not be overcome, but for Blake- they never count him out. I pray he will prove his will and determination to overcome all odds again.

One day you will all meet this miracle boy, and don't be surprised if his Mommy and Daddy are smiling ear to ear...even if he is crying and fussy. We love you completely little Blake.

We wish you all a good day, and many thanks for the prayers...

Daddy

♥ **January 07, 2005 at 04:35 PM CST**

Thank you for all the prayers!!!! I Believe the prayers are working. Blake is back in his happy spot on his tummy. The doctor decided to try and see how Blake would tolerate being on his belly again. The nurses were a little nervous to flip him, but Blake behaved. He liked it! He hasn't been on his belly since Tuesday. He is now sleeping on a water bed. (Gel pads under his body) I am so impressed with my son he has been fighting everything off that has been thrown at him.

The infectious disease doctor now has a final on his cultures. The doctors now know exactly which antibiotics to kill the bug. Go away bugs!!! Blake is ventilating well and keeping his BP normal. Thank God!! Blake's color looks better and his belly is softer than yesterday. The doctor decided to try giving him a little mommy's milk 1cc/hr. Hey it's a start!!

Please continue to pray, especially for the antibiotics to kill the bug and then we can move on to better days. Let's also pray for all the infants in the NICU--they have 28 babies. We hope to get back there to feed and grow Blake.

Thank you and I love you all.

Love,

Kimberly :)

♥ **January 08, 2005 at 08:20 PM CST**

Hello everyone,

I don't know if you realize, but Blake is 12 weeks old today!!!!!!
He is having a good day! The nurses flipped him back on his belly at 3pm so he is happy. Grandma and Grandpa Kramr just arrived from Wheelock, so they are anxious to see sweet Blake.

I do want to share a moment with everyone. I have the most caring and loving husband. He has just been wonderful to me through this most difficult time. On Dec. 16th which was Blake's 2 month Birthday, Chad set up a surprise for me from Blake. I was helping Tanya (one of Blake's primary nurses) label pumps. She was in on the surprise too. She was distracting me. I turned around and she put a red blanket on Blake and there was a box with a letter on top.

The letter read:

*“Dear Mommy,
Daddy and I worked together to pick out this present for you. This small token of our love for you holds meaning as well as its simple beauty. This bracelet holds our two birthstones, Mommy and son, Sapphire and Opal. These stones are intertwined as our spirits will always be. My stone, the Opal, is a symbol of ‘HOPE’ Ancients believed that the Opals were made when the storm god, jealous of the beauty of the rainbow god, broke the rainbow and its pieces fell to the earth as Opals. This stone more than any other stone shines all the colors of the rainbow. Others believe the Opal invites happy dreams and changes. Your stone Mommy is known for clear thinking. The Sapphire is said to be helpful in freeing one of unpleasant thoughts and it brings joy and peace of mind by making one more receptive to beauty and intuition. These two stones seem to be a perfect match for one another...just like you and me. I love you Mommy.*

Don’t worry Mommy, I’ll always be with you...

*Love Always,
BLAKE*

P.S.

Daddy didn’t think you would mind getting you Christmas present early, so we put this together for our two month anniversary together...December 16, 2004“

I hope you aren't all in tears like I was that day. The ironic thing is I didn't even know that October's birthstone is opal nor did I know it meant HOPE. Isn't God great. He puts thoughts in your head when you least expect it.

I hope you all have a great weekend!! Talk to you soon.

Love,
Kimberly :)

♥ **January 10, 2005 at 09:15 AM CST**

Monday, Monday...

Good morning everyone, Chad here (from work). Hope everyone had a relaxing weekend, and is ready to face the new week. Blake rested all weekend, and that was a good thing. Today will be a busy day for our son. For the last several days Blake has been on a high frequency ventilator.

With small improvements over the weekend, Blake is ready to go back to the traditional ventilator. With the traditional ventilator, Blake will be using his lungs again to breathe in and out and therefore use more energy. Blake will also have an echocardiogram and an abdominal ultrasound to check his heart functions and review the status of the blood clots respectively. Mommy will be with Blake all day to encourage him. "You go Blake!!"

Blake wanted to thank Grandpa Kramr for donating blood this morning here in Austin. "Thanks Grampa". We'll all know where Blake's tendencies for fried chicken and 'Czech'-chocolate cake come from. Hopefully the blood bank will be able to reserve grandpas donated blood for Blake, but we'll learn more today as to how the system works. Blake has received red blood cells and platelets from time to time and we know that around this time of year, the banks can run short. Please consider donating blood in your area if you can, we know how important this gift can be for all people facing emergencies and surgeries. It is certainly...'the gift of life.'

Otherwise we are waiting patiently to hear that Blake's infection is improving. Each day, the doctors are sending blood samples to the lab to be cultured. It usually takes two days to see the results from that particular culture. So far each has returned positive for the infection, but with each day Blake is getting more antibiotics to fight off the 'bugs'.

We will update everyone as soon as we see improvements. Pray for Blake to fight off this infection through the coming days. Visibly Blake is looking better over the past three days...we are praying that the antibiotics are kicking in. Thank you for your continued prayers...

Also, thank you all for the encouraging messages and positive vibes sent Blake's way. God has a mission for Blake, and it has already started... Continued blessing for you all, and prayers for all your own individual challenges. We love you all....

Daddy

♥ January 11, 2005 at 04:47 PM CST

Good Afternoon everyone,

I want to tell you about my wonderful afternoon with Blake. The nurse let me hold Blake today for about 20 min. I believe it helps him to feel better, but of course it helps me as well. He is changing everyday. His facial features are becoming more detailed. He has Chad's chin and my upper lip. It was such a great moment again. We are hoping he will tolerate us holding him everyday. Daddy is next to hold his son.

In the last two days great things are happening. I am amazed everyday how Blake can overcome such hurdles. Yesterday the switch to the conventional ventilator went very well. He is taken a few breathes over the ventilator at times. His belly is softer and looks better in color. The echo showed great results--ventricular function improved and the pressure through the pulmonary band is normal.

All the doctors are extremely impressed with this miracle baby. He is off all of the pressure IV meds. Blake is holding a strong heart rate and pressure on his own. The doctors increased his feeding to 10cc/3hr. Please pray that he continues to hold his BP and tolerate the feedings.

The nurse will be pulling out the arterial line this evening, because it is a source of infection. He has another line in a vein that the nurses can get, but it won't last long. The surgeon wants to put a new central line in as soon as the infection is clear, which could be Thurs or Fri?? The new line will last longer than the one in his femoral vein. I hope I haven't totally confused you. It does get a little overwhelming. I feel like I'm on continuing ed to learn all about neonatal medicine.

The PICU and NICU are working on Blake to return to feed and grow in the NICU. He has just been on a vacation from the NICU. We will miss everyone in the PICU, but we hope the staff will come visit.

Thank you so much for your continued thoughts and prayers. It is working. Please pray for my wonderful husband, Chad because I know it is extremely difficult going to work everyday. I love you all.

Love,

Kimberly :)

♥ **January 12, 2005 at 10:45 AM CST**

Good morning everyone,

Make sure you look at the new pictures posted this AM by Chad.

Well, Blake decided he wanted a little attention this AM as I arrived. He started dropping his sats at change of shift, I guess he wanted to meet the new nurse sooner. He did have a low grade fever during the night. The doctor came in to check him and is worried he may have a new infection. We hope NOT, but it is a possibility. The doctor ordered another , and trachea culture that was sent off this AM for fungus. I was told it is very common to have a fungal infection after being on so many antibiotics. A new antibiotic will be started today to treat for fungus.

After the doctor checked Blake and ordered an extra albuterol neb, Blake decided to start breathing easier. As of now, he is stable. One of his IV BP meds was restarted last PM. BP is stable also.

It is such a roller coaster with Blake. Sometimes it seems we should be in control of his actions, but we are not, Blake is in control. I will keep you informed how the day goes. Rounds are about to start so I gotta go, see what the plan will be for him today.

Talk to you later.

Kimberly :)

♥ **January 12, 2005 at 05:10 PM CST**

Good Evening and indeed it is!!

Blake had his one little episode this morning. The rest of the day he rested and had his first day of physical therapy. He slept through the entire session. He is quite stiff, but we will help loosen him up.

I am so glad to report a great afternoon. I just let him sleep and grow, while I charted in my diary. I have also started coloring. It's a great coping mechanism. (Distracting & Relaxing)

I will talk to you tomorrow.

Kimberly :)

♥ January 14, 2005 at 08:59 AM CST

Friday already,

Good Morning to everyone...Daddy here, with a news flash on Blake. Blake had an eye exam yesterday, his third or fourth now, and the results showed that he has ROP (Retinopathy of Pre-maturity) severe since his last exam. ROP is an eye disease caused by abnormal growth of blood vessels in the retina. This is fairly common in preemies born as early as Blake. For those who go to the web for info., Blake is at Stage 3. This condition is treated many times with laser surgery, and Blake's is scheduled for 4 pm this afternoon. The procedure will be done there in his PICU room.

There is a good web-site at www.charles-retina.com/rop-faq.htm

We pray that all will go well with this treatment, and that Blake's eyesight will not be compromised too much, if at all. We can expect that Blake may need glasses early in life, as many babies need with this condition. Girls dig cool glasses, though right...I'm sure Mommy will adore her little boy.

Besides all this news yesterday, Blake had a wonderful day. Mommy was rewarded for all her day's worry, with getting to hold Blake again last night. They are so cute together. He continued to have a good night through to our 6:15 am phone call report with his nurse. 'Way to go Blake!' Though he had one positive culture from the infection from his removed arterial line two days ago, his other cultures have been negative for four days. Keep praying for Blake to rid himself of this infection, and move on to better days.

We'll send updates as to the laser surgery, but keep in mind we will be monitoring all this for some time. Many thanks for all the prayers and thoughts for Blake. Have a great Friday, and safe weekend!!

New photos soon to come....

Daddy

♥ **January 15, 2005 at 10:30 AM CST**

Blake does it again...

Friday was a good day; ending what was a mostly positive week for our little boy. The retinal specialist thought the laser treatment went well, though we will know more in the coming weeks. Dr. Harper will examine Blake's eyes again next Thursday or Friday. Blake's case of ROP is very unique, according to Dr. Harper, it was not the textbook situation he generally finds. We all knew that Blake is special and without compare...

Later after the surgery, Daddy was treated to some 'one-on-one' time with Blake. Blake is tolerating these eventful holds very well, and they gave mommy time to change out his bedding. These moments help recharge Mommy and Daddy to say the least. With each cradling, our hearts are filled with the hope that we will come through all this in due time and bring Blake home where he belongs. God is watching out for us too, and reminding us that we will one day take our son out of this hospital. I look forward to the day that I can see the sun shine over Blake's face.

With the time we have spent here at Children's Hospital, many prayers have been sent out for the caregivers helping Blake and others. The doctors, nurses, and specialist see more than I ever imagined happening to all of our children. We want them all to know our sincere gratitude for all they do for our children, and for the way they do it. I have heard many of them say they are 'treating the family', not just the patients themselves. This is for certain. May God continue to bless each of them.

Hopeful prayers for the coming days...and positive updates.
Enjoy the weekend with friends and family, and feel the sun's warmth.

Good Day.

Daddy

