

Inspired By Miracles

Meet Jake

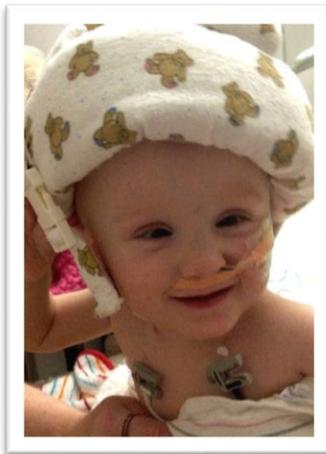
Age 6, Palmyra

Like many expectant parents, Kari and John were excited about growing their family. But then their son, John Eric Petrone, III, known as “Jake,” was born at 24 weeks and 4 days. Born 16 weeks early, he was considered a micro-preemie on the cusp of survivability.

At birth, Jake weighed just 1lb 8oz, the same weight as six sticks of butter. Jake had no heart rate at delivery. The neonatal team at Penn State Children’s Hospital was able to resuscitate him, but they were not confident he would survive his first night. At the family’s request, Jake was baptized in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). The family was told to expect the worst.



Jake in the NICU photographed beside his dad’s PA State Police badge



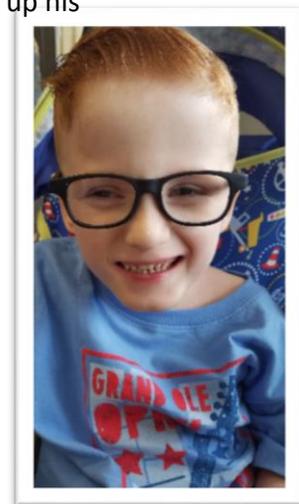
Jake after brain surgery

Overnight, a miracle happened. Not only was Jake alive, his condition had stabilized. John and Kari remember Jake’s doctor saying, “He’s here, and he’s not going anywhere.” At almost the exact moment, Jake raised his little arm and shook his fist in defiance!

Jake faced many obstacles during his 148-day NICU stay. “I’ve watched him die a dozen times,” says John. Jake experienced a Grade IV (the worst) brain bleed, which caused cerebral palsy. He also needed tube feedings and a ventilator. He was so small, Kari could fit her ring up his arm.

When Jake finally came home, he battled new challenges including eye surgery and brain surgery due to hydrocephalus (a build-up of fluid on the brain). He participates in speech, physical and occupational therapies to help tackle mobility issues from cerebral palsy.

Jake is a very inquisitive boy who loves to sing, dance, read and watch Daniel Tiger’s Neighborhood and American Idol. For a child who wasn’t supposed to survive his first day of life, every step of his journey has been miraculous. Your support continues to give Jake every chance to live his healthiest life.



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Thank you for giving the #GiftOfGrowingUp!

