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BABY CRAZY: LIFE WITH QUADRUPLETS



When Katie Voelcker thinks about her life before she had quadruplets, she remembers reading books, tending to housework, and spontaneous trips to the park with her 4-year-

old son, Tyler. “Now,” says Katie, who lives with husband Allen in Chestertown, Md., “things are a little more hectic.”

Their lives went from easygoing to warp speed last fall when doctors and nurses at AAMC helped Katie deliver quadruplets—two boys, Daniel and William, and two girls, Allison and Alexis.

“The C-section procedure went very well. It was uncomplicated,” says Anthony Moorman, MD, one of the OB-GYNs who delivered the babies.

Katie delivered the children at 32 weeks and 4 days. She had been hospitalized for two weeks before delivery. As is standard procedure in premature, high-risk births, the quadruplets remained in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) under observation for several weeks before being sent home.

Fast-forward to fall 2013, the Voelcker babies keep their parents on their toes. They are crawling, working on pulling themselves up to a standing position, eating solids, and refining their communication skills.

Do you go places?

“We went to Wal-Mart the other day,” Katie sighs and smiles. “We have a minivan. It’s a tight squeeze, so we are looking at getting a bigger passenger van. I don’t want to, but we may have no choice!” Most of the time, Katie is happy and overwhelmed at the same time. But she has her moments. “Some days when it’s just me and the kids, I kind of shut down.”

Who has been helpful along the way?

“Allen is my best friend and partner in this crazy life of ours. I couldn’t keep going without his support and love,” Katie says. “My mother-in-law, Edwina, lives in Pasadena and has been here for us since the later part of my pregnancy. My mom came in from Utah and was here for two months. People from our church also have been a big help too. They send us meals; come over to lend a hand with anything we need; and take our oldest, Tyler, out to play.” There is also an online community of quad moms Katie regularly checks in with. “It helps to see there are other people who are

going through it at the same time. It makes it feel normal. I don't feel so different."

How do you make time for yourself?

"It's harder. I look forward to going to the grocery store, taking a shower, nap time, and bed time," says Katie. "From 7:30 to 10pm is my time when I relax." There is an especially caring teenager from church named Nikki who loves babies and happily babysits all five children so Katie and Allen can go on date nights. "I call her my little lifesaver. She knows the routine as well as I do," Katie says.

Do you have advice for other moms?

"Don't be afraid to ask for help," Katie says. "That was the hardest thing for me. Believe it or not, there are good people out there who not only can help but want to help. You just have to ask."

 AAMC is the Safe, Smart Place for you and your baby. Get acquainted with the space by taking a video tour [here\(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g658btSFlu4&list=PLF850B35A45208E35&index=1\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g658btSFlu4&list=PLF850B35A45208E35&index=1).

