



Estelle Thiffault  
6 months old

Suffered a foetomaternal transfusion

## Laval's Enfant Soleil

**Seeing a child struggle to survive, to get better, is so difficult...  
Sick children teach us such powerful life lessons!**

The appointment on August 4, 2016 should have been a simple, routine check-up for Sonia, who was 35 weeks pregnant, but fate decided otherwise. When the doctor told Sonia and her husband, Hugo, that their baby was in danger, they were gripped by panic. The baby wasn't moving, and her heart was beating very fast. Estelle was suffering from a foetomaternal transfusion and she had to be taken out very quickly. Nothing in previous check-ups or ultrasounds had predicted this. Time was of the essence, and the mother was rushed to the operating room for an emergency C-section.

When she was born at the Cité de la Santé de Laval, Estelle had difficulty breathing and lost a lot of blood. Her condition was quickly stabilized, but she had to be transferred in an ambulance to Sainte-Justine. She was monitored in intensive care for seven days and underwent a battery of tests and blood samples.

"Seeing your tiny baby get needles, all hooked up, and hearing the cardiac monitor constantly, is really hard!" says Estelle's father, with emotion. "Reality caught up to us very quickly: we had two other children at home to care for. Émilien was worried about his little sister, and Léanne, who was 2, missed her mother."

Happily, this routine check-up saved the little girl's life. "If my appointment had been scheduled for a few hours later, Estelle probably would not have survived," says her mother with a frightened look, but full of gratitude. Estelle returned to the Cité de la Santé one week after her birth and after a few days, she could finally be taken home, to the family's great joy. The doctors must still check that she doesn't develop anemia and that she gains weight, but given the circumstances, it was a welcome relief.

Although the long-term effects of the foetomaternal transfusion cannot be predicted, specialists agree that Estelle is out of danger and can hope to have a totally normal life. She gave quite a fright to her parents who, more than ever, want to remind everyone who donates that they are making a difference. "The equipment that helped to keep Estelle alive was funded by Opération Enfant Soleil! Thank you for your generosity and your support."

*Estelle's family thanks you for being there for her and for all sick children in Québec!*

**Sonia Mercurio, Hugo Thiffault, Émilien and Léanne**

Little miracles don't  
happen on their own

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