

CHILDREN'S MERCY DELIVERS FIRST BABY AT NEW FETAL HEALTH CENTER

Special unit is one of the first to deliver babies within a children's hospital

Kansas City, MO – March 28, 2011 – After receiving care from a highly trained medical team of neonatologists, pediatric subspecialists, obstetricians and maternal/fetal specialists, Maddox Hodges has left the hospital as the first baby delivered at the Elizabeth J. Ferrell Fetal Health Center at Children's Mercy Hospitals and Clinics. The center is one of only three such units in pediatric hospitals in the nation -- and the first in the Midwest -- to provide delivery and specialty services within a children's hospital.

Born on March 10, 2011 with a rare and complex congenital heart defect, Maddox's condition was identified during pregnancy and presented a serious risk to the newborn. This led his parents and their physician to determine that the delivery should take place at Children's Mercy, where prenatal services, delivery, and pediatric subspecialty care could all be expertly administered under one roof. In addition to providing integrated, specialty care for high-risk babies born elsewhere and transported to Children's Mercy, the hospital's Fetal Health Center now offers immediate, post-delivery specialty and multidisciplinary care for selected infants with serious birth defects; followed by care in the only advanced Level IIIc neonatal intensive care unit in the region.

"There aren't words that can express the sense of relief I felt to be in the same hospital with my newborn," said Lindsay Hodges, Maddox's mother. "The care we received at Children's Mercy was amazing, and I knew that if something were to go wrong we had the expertise we needed under the same roof. It was also a relief to have my husband with me because if Maddox was born at another hospital, my husband would have needed to be with Maddox and not me. I also believe I healed faster because we were all together, and I did not have to rush or worry about my own discharge from the hospital so I could be with Maddox."

Birth defects are a major cause of infant mortality in Kansas City and nationwide. Since opening in December 2010, The Children's Mercy Fetal Health Center's Integrated Specialty Clinic has seen expectant mothers whose babies have been diagnosed prenatally with serious conditions including congenital heart defects, airway obstruction, abdominal wall malformation and neural tube defects. The center provides a unique, collaborative approach to high-risk pregnancies that also includes diagnosis, comprehensive family counseling, fetal treatments, delivery planning and the most advanced postnatal care for the newborn.

"It is uncommon for babies to be born at a children's hospital – there are only a few nationwide that offer this service," said Timothy Bennett, MD, a maternal/fetal medicine specialist and director of Maternal/Fetal & Obstetric Services for the Fetal Health Center. "But the benefits are immense for families giving birth to very high-risk infants. The newborn immediately receives the specialized care that can optimally be delivered at a children's hospital."

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The Elizabeth J. Ferrell Fetal Health Center is an innovative and important community resource, and is offered in collaboration with the University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Medicine. The center is led by [Howard Kilbride, MD](#), chief of Neonatology and director of Neonatal Services and [Timothy Bennett, MD](#), director of Maternal/Fetal & Obstetric Services; and Melanie Foltz, RN, MSN, director of Perinatal Services; and was developed with the leadership and expertise of Dev Maulik, MD, PhD, chairman of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the UMKC School of Medicine.

About Children's Mercy Hospitals and Clinics

Children's Mercy Hospitals and Clinics, located in Kansas City, Mo., is one of the nation's top pediatric medical centers. The 314-bed hospital provides care for children from birth through the age of 18, and has been recognized by the American Nurses Credentialing Center with Magnet designation for excellence in nursing services, and ranked by *U.S. News & World Report* as one of "America's Best Children's Hospitals." Its faculty of 600 pediatricians and researchers across more than 40 subspecialties are actively involved in clinical care, pediatric research, and educating the next generation of pediatric subspecialists. For more information about Children's Mercy and its research, visit childrensmercy.org or download our mobile phone app *CMH4YOU* for all phone types. For breaking news and videos, follow us on [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) and [Facebook](#).

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