

## Just a Heartbeat Away – Jessica Rush



I had a second cousin who died when she was eighteen months old. She was what they called “a blue baby”. She had the same heart challenges that I was born with. The difference is that she was born in the 1940s.

My name is Jessica and I have had open heart surgery twice. I was born with a hypoplastic left ventricle (simply meaning I had no working pumping chamber), double outlet right ventricle, two holes, and my mitral valve did not work. The doctors told my parents there were several factors which would indicate the time had arrived for my second surgery. During the interim my parents did some research and chose two surgeons from University of Colorado Hospital (UCH).

The rest is history! The surgery, the Fontan, was a complete success. I have been the subject of a case study as a healthy survivor of the Fontan. I am one of only a few patients at UCH with my heart condition to carry a baby to term. The challenge of a pregnancy with my heart was simplified by my cardiologist, Dr. Kay, and his spectacular team from UCH. I delivered my daughter, Daisy, at UCH January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2008. She was born with tetralogy of Fallot (a heart condition that restricts blood flow). Her open heart surgery was two months later.

Daisy and I are healthy and living normal lives. We are walking testimonies to the advancement of technology along with great care. UCH continues to play an active, important role in both our lives.