

## CODA PATIENT PORTRAITS

a series by Seema Marwaha



Photos by Seema Marwaha

### Becca Mintz

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**B**ecca delivered her son, Theodore, prematurely at 28 weeks.

[I texted my boss that I was leaving for an hour to get what I thought would be a quick checkup. I grabbed my health card and my cell phone and headed to the hospital. I had felt fewer kicks over the last few days — being 28 weeks pregnant, I wanted to be on the safe side. Within 12 hours, I had an emergency cesarean delivery and my baby boy was born.]

I remember feeling nervous. I felt like he was a medical specimen because of the incubator and all the other wires and machines. It was hard to immediately feel attached. I was too scared to ask the only question I really cared about — was he going to make it? Because I wasn't sure that I was ready for the answer yet.

People describe seeing their baby for the first time as a feeling of love, the best feeling in the world. I did not feel that way. I felt terrified. I remember wondering what he would look like — would he look like a baby?

Seeing him for the first time was a rush of emotion, but not in the romantic, “best-moment-of-my-life” way that I assumed it would be. It was more like fear, nervousness and some guilt for feeling fear and nervousness rather than joy. It's hard to fall in love when you don't know how long you have.

We brought him home around the time of his actual due date. His corrected age is 2 months. Now, knowing him, I get even more emotional when I think about this experience. It's less abstract now. I get choked up realizing how terrible it would be not to have him. I love him so much.

**It's hard to fall in love when you don't know how long you have.**

