

Austpremli

#### AT A GLANCE

Austprem Inc. is a major national self-help Internet based support group which now has well over 700 members!

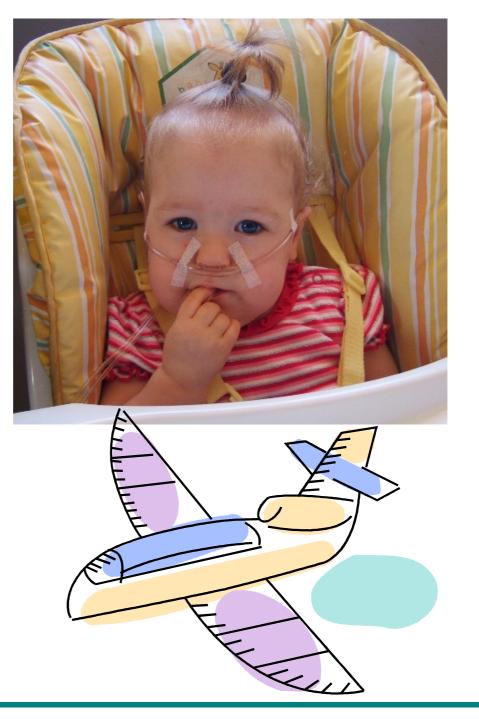
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Volume 6 Issue 2

Premature birth, babies and beyond

# Come, fly with me...



## Joining Austprem

Austprem is an Internet based support group.

To join Austprem Inc., you will need to go to <u>http://www.austprem.org.au/join.html</u> and fill out the online membership form. To access the online forums and chats (where most of the Austprem "action" happens), you will also need to follow the steps at <u>http://www.austprem.org.au/</u> <u>forums.html</u>

to register with mc2 and subscribe to an Austprem group.

Join now - it is a great opportunity to share with others who have "been there" and who can understand your experiences.

## Membership is FREE!

Any information provided to Austprem is held in confidence and will not be used for any other purpose or given out to any third party without your permission.



PremiePress

PremiePress is a publication for those who are interested in the development of premature infants and prematurely born children.

For further information and subscription details please contact:

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### Austprem Forums / Message Boards

#### Austprem - Forum

Austprem provides a forum for Australian and N.Z. parents and caregivers of premature (or preterm) babies to discuss the issues and experience of prematurity in a local context. We welcome parents, extended family, NICU and MCH nurses and any interested health professionals. Through Austprem, families who have experienced the complex challenges of parenting a premature baby, reach out to other families facing this journey and offer friendship, information and support. Medical professionals are encouraged to participate in the discussions both to learn about the parental experience of prematurity and to offer insight and understanding.

#### →<u>Austprem - Pregnancy Support Group</u>

The Austprem – Pregnancy Support Group has been set up for those who are contemplating or experiencing a pregnancy following a preterm birth, and for those at risk of giving birth prematurely.

Everyone is welcome to join Austprem – Pregnancy Support Group. You might be pregnant again, you might just be thinking about another pregnancy or you might have already completed a subsequent pregnancy and want to support someone else who is just starting on the journey. Sharing your thoughts and experiences might just help another mother, and support is what Austprem is all about.

#### Prematurity in the Press

This Austprem group is an online forum where summaries/abstracts of articles in journals, print/online media and book reviews etc that feature issues about prematurity are posted. Where possible links to the full text of the article will also be included, but this depends on the availability of the article and Copyright. This group is a semi-public group, nonmembers are able to read forum, but only members can post articles to the group and join in any subsequent discussions.

Take a look at http://www.austprem.org.au/forums.html for information on how to join any of these Austprem Forums

### Come fly, come fly away (or drive)

Travelling with young children is often thought of negatively. Flying, in particular, with its confined spaces and no control over when to stop can be a daunting thought. Flying with a prem presents challenges of its own, and there are a few extra things to consider before you book that getaway.

When choosing your destination, keep in mind whether any vaccinations are required and whether they are appropriate for your baby. Also think about how long you will be in the air. If you are looking at a very long flight, it might be worth considering a stop-over along the way so you can all freshen up and enjoy some space.

One very important consideration, particularly if your baby needed extra oxygen for any length of time in hospital or after discharge, and especially if they are still under 12 months, is whether they will need oxygen during the flight. You should check with your child's doctors and you may need to take your child to have a hypoxia test to check on their oxygen saturation in plane air. The air on an aero-plane has less oxygen in it than the usual air that we breathe, and sometimes it isn't quite enough O2 for those with lung problems to be able to keep their sats at an appropriate level. Should your child

"fail" the hypoxia test, they will need to have supplemental oxygen during the flight, and this will need to be organised well in advance. You can read about Pyper's adventures when flying with O2 on page 4.

The "hum" of the aeroplane can be soothing for some children, and they might sleep through most of the flight. Others quickly get restless and it can be hard to know what to do. If you can time your flight to leave around when your child usually sleeps, they may settle down well. If they normally sleep with a particular toy or blankie, bring it out when you want them to sleep—they may recognise the cue. Otherwise a stash of new (or not seen recently) toys can be a hit. Try to find toys without too many little bits that can be lost. A new book with lots of flaps can be a great time passer.

Long trips in the car can also be difficult; whilst the movement will send some babies straight to sleep, others will find the confinement of their restraints to be too much. Make sure your restraint is installed correctly and that your baby's head is at a comfortable angle. Regular stops for some fresh air and a run around (for those who can!) can make for a much more pleasant journey for all.

### Travel Tips

Crayola Colour Wonder packs are great - the included textas colour only on the special paper, not on the car, plane, child or anywhere else.

Take along snacks and drinks (if permitted); your child may not like the food they are served, or may want something to eat at a different time, and a hungry child can be difficult to settle. Try to keep the snacks "non-messy": dried fruit, rice crackers, fruit bars etc

Take wipes, a hand towel and spare clothing (for you and the child) - you never know how grateful you may be.

Pack enough formula (if using) to cover the flight and beyond - flights often get delayed and you may find your two hour journey suddenly becomes eight hours.

Travel size Magna Doodle type toys are fun; younger kids can draw, older ones can play noughts and crosses, or hangman. The pen is usually attached which makes it easy to retrieve when it is dropped!

Take something to suck during take-offs and landings. Breastfeeding, or a dummy will usually work for babies, a lollipop or something similar should help older children.

If you have any choice over airline, try to get one that has individual screens for each seat - there is usually a children's channel that might help pass some time.

Check the airline's website for check-in times and any special arrangements for children, including meals.

# Pyper's Story

Our first trip with the O2 was an interesting one. It meant I had to carry Pyper (8kg), a nappy bag (5kg) and also the oxygen (5kg bottle); that's a grand total of 18kg's! I must have looked like a pack horse walking out on to the tarmac!! I asked if I could possibly have a smaller, lighter tank but they said "all other mothers can carry a 5kg bottle"...... yes they can but with everything it makes it difficult to get through the cabin door. Then the air staff ask if I want a pillow and a baby seatbelt......if you can see the funny side of all this - O2 and nappy bag on opposite shoulders baby on one hip, pillow under other arm and seatbelt in teeth trying to make way down to back of plane bumping people on the way. Oops - sorry - I apologise, lol!!!

Getting airport security to approve an "explosive package" was not an easy task. The problem was that our local airport doesn't deal with low flow paediatric oxygen often. There were forms to be gotten from the specialists that had to go to Head of Security in Brisbane to get approval (and these need to be renewed from time to time). The last time it was renewed I actually had security from Melbourne ring me to get information from me about the oxygen. I learnt to always carry the paperwork with me after the first time I was stopped by security and asked for clearance forms for the oxygen, which I didn't have. After many phone calls to superiors they eventually contacted the Hospital.

Going through airport security was a pain as we had to unpack everything out of the pram fold it all down so it could go through the x-ray, then wait with a baby on hip and male security staff that had no idea how to fold a pram up or down! On our last few trips they could see that we were frequent flyers and would just pass the portable x-ray thingy over Pyper in the pram and have a sticky in the pram pockets, they must have had a red flag on our names saying "pain in the bums" just let 'em through lol!! Taxi drivers are usually good with prams though.

Pyper has only just ceased using night oxygen after 2yrs.



### Flu Vaccine

Have you had your Flu Vaccine yet?

Although you may not fit into one of the high risk groups, the more people that are vaccinated against flu, the less the flu will spread and affect those who could get seriously ill, or die.

People with chronic lung conditions, and children, especially those under 5, are some of those at most risk.

Complications of the flu include pneumonia and pleurisy, and around 1500 people die of the flu in Australia each year.

"Children, especially pre-school children, catch flu more easily than other age groups, spread it more readily, and are more likely to be hospitalised or die from it than adults."

Children under age nine will need two shots the first year, a month apart. After that is it just one shot each year.

#### More information

http://www.abc.net.au/health/thepulse/stories/2008/05/08/2238900.htm

# Samuel's Story

Samuel was born at 23 weeks. We've flown with him 3 times. The first was when he was being transferred to Dubbo from Westmead when he was 4 months old (1 week corrected), and off O2. We flew with Wing Away and there was a nurse who monitored him the whole way with an oximeter. She gave him a small amount of O2 when necessary as the altitude levels would affect his saturation levels. He was fine on the trip but was very unsettled that night while we were in hospital.

Ten days later, he was flown back to Westmead Children's Hospital with a lung infection. He'd been put back on O2 as his saturation levels were low. Again we flew with Wing Away and had a nurse to monitor him. He was fine on the trip and again unsettled that night and his saturation levels low. (probably due to infection, rather than the flight though).

Lastly when discharged from Westmead the second time, just Sam and myself flew with QANTAS. We had to get a clearance and written confirmation stating everything about the O2. They couldn't have been more helpful when checking in. We had to have the O2 cylinder in a particular bag that the airline required we have. On the plane, we were the last to get on and off and the cylinder was placed on the floor under the seat surrounded by pillows!!!

Sam was again unsettled that night but was fine after that. He remained on O2 another 2 months on .1 mls per min. He has now been off the O2 for about 10 weeks.

## National Premature Birth Awareness Week

### 24 - 30 November 2008

## Assistance Needed

#### NPBAW Co-ordinator and NPBAW Support Officers

The Austprem Development Group is looking to appoint a person to co-ordinate National Premature Birth Awareness Week, 24 - 30 November 2008. You will need to be enthusiastic about the cause, organised and willing to approach potential supporters and sponsors and liaise with the media and other groups.

2008 will be the second National Premature Birth Awareness Week. The Week aims to raise awareness of the signs and symptoms that may lead to premature birth.

Support Officers will be appointed to assist the Co-ordinator.

If you have any questions, or would like some further information, please email austprem@ausptrem.org.au

Should you wish to be considered for a rewarding role as either the Co-ordinator or a Support Officer (we anticipate the positions will require a commitment of, on average, a few hours a week), please email austprem@austprem.org.au detailing your position preference and any relevant experience as soon as possible.

These are volunteer positions; expenses will be reimbursed.

# Expressions of Interest from Sponsors

If you, or someone you know, has products that would be of interest to pregnant women, then you may be interested in supporting National Premature Birth Awareness Week 2008. It could be anything from a pregnancy product or a product for use after baby is born, to an online store where someone on bedrest could shop from home.

Please send an email to austprem@austprem.org.au detailing your product, and we will get a sponsorship pack out to you as soon as they have been finalised.

# Thank you for your support!



National Premature Birth Awareness Week 24 - 30 November



www.bornearly.org.au

# Stronger laws for the safer restraint

### of children in cars

New child restraint laws have been approved by Australia's Transport ministers, but have not yet been implemented in Australian jurisdictions.

Once implemented, the key changes will be:

- Children less than 6 months old must be restrained in a rearward facing restraint
- Children older than 6 months and under 4 years must be restrained in rearward or forward facing restraint with a built in harness
- Children older than 4 years and under 7 years must be in a forward facing restraint or a booster
- Children under 7 years must not sit in the front seat unless all rear seats are already occupied by children under 7.

The RACV recommends that children under 12 years do not sit in the front seat.

#### More Information

http://www.racv.com.au/wps/wcm/connect/Internet/Primary/road+safety/child+safety/child+restraints/ the+law+and+standards+on+child+restraints/

http://www.ntc.gov.au/NewsDetail.aspx?page=A0240030550000002000233



Dechlan, aged 12 months, and still rearward facing due to being a lightweight.

### In the News

#### Premature babies don't grow out of their problems

INFANTS born prematurely are much more likely to die during childhood and, if they survive, much less likely to have children of their own in adulthood, according to the largest study of prematurity ever undertaken.

http://www.theage.com.au/news/parenting/premature-babies-dont-grow-out-of-their-problems/2008/03/26/1206207207332.html

#### Insurance for unborn babies launched

UNBORN babies can now be insured against birth complications, defects and even death under a policy being offered by one of the world's biggest insurers...

http://www.news.com.au/business/money/story/0,25479,23605418-5015699,00.html

#### Study links preemies with autism signs

A study released Wednesday in conjunction with World Autism Day suggests that premature babies are at greater risk of being diagnosed with autism.

The study looked at 91 babies with an average gestation time of 26 weeks. Researchers in Montreal and Boston performed standard development tests on the babies between the ages of 18 and 24 months.

http://www.ctv.ca/servlet/ArticleNews/story/CTVNews/20080402/ preemies\_autism\_080402/20080402?hub=CTVNewsAt11



#### Premature infants more likely to survive

Premature infants are more likely to survive - and survive without a disability - if the baby is female, from a single birth, is of a higher birth weight, and if the mother has received steroids to help the baby's lungs mature before birth, says research partially conducted at UAB and published in the 17 April issue of the New England Journal of Medicine. The combination of factors is more important than the single issue of gestational age.

http://www.sciencecentric.com/news/article.php?q=08041925

Pre-flight testing of preterm infants with neonatal lung disease: a retrospective review

Authors: Udomittipong, K. Stick, S M. Verheggen, M. Oostryck, J. Sly, P D. Hall, G L. Source: Thorax. 61(4):343-7, 2006 Apr.

"**CONCLUSIONS:** A high proportion of ex-preterm infants not currently requiring supplemental oxygen referred for fitness-to-fly assessment and less than 12 months corrected age are at a high risk of requiring in-flight oxygen. Referral of this patient group for fitness to fly assessment including a hypoxia test may be indicated."

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earlybirds

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and Aromababy

Cooler Bags

# now available.

# Great for transporting your precious breast milk to hospital

Purchase a cooler bag directly from Austprem! Our bags feature an adjustable long carry strap, handy front pocket for keys, phone, loose change etc and fit around 6 bottles. Also fantastic for picnics and as a lunch bag.

Available filled with an assortment of goodies and vouchers for your new baby, including an Earlybirds hat and an Aromababy sample; or unfilled.

> \$15 Filled \$10 Unfilled Price includes postage

Available exclusively from the Austprem BORN EARLY Online Shop <u>http://www.bornearly.org.au/shop</u>



Order your toys online, get great products, delivery to your door and support Austprem too!

Simply nominate Austprem, Sunbury, VIC as the fundraising recipient at Step 5 when you order.

http://www.toysandmore.com.au

#### Austprem Ink







2 Jeremy (11) 2 Laura (2) 3 Ava (2) 3 Dylan (2) 3 Matthias (2) 4 Olivia (9) 4 Sherri (6) 5 Madeline (7) 5 Connor (5) 5 Amy (5) 6 Kiana (3) 7 Cameron (4) 8 Cam (13) 8 Bethany (2) 8 Isaac (2) 8 Nathaniel (2) 10 Mathew (10) 10 Dylan (9)

1 Jackson (4)

2 Auriella (6)

2 Abby (3)

2 Ryan (3)

2 Abbey (1)

3 Taylor (9)

3 Brooke (5)

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3 Millie (5)

3 Noah (4)

3 Trinity (2)

4 Liam (3)

5 Ethan (2)

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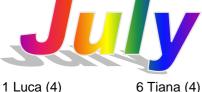
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10 Maya (5)



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16 Joshua (3) 16 Aidan (2) 16 Kai (1) 16 Chiara (1) 17 Samantha (6) 17 Aimee-Rose (5) 17 Anna (5) 17 Kyle (2) 18 Rhys (10) 18 Christopher (7) 18 Josalyn (2) 19 Lily (3) 19 Milena (1) 19 Allegra (1) 21 Cullen (6) 21 Nina (5) 21 Xavier (5) 21 Marcus (4)

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26 Elbe (1) 27 Aaron (2) 27 Connor (1) 28 Brett (5) 28 Sally (4) 29 Gabrielle (13) 29 Lucas (3) 29 Darcy (3) 29 Tiara (1) 29 Olivia (1) 30 Joshua (8)

19 Indiana (3) 19 Jacob (2) 20 Cody (13) 20 David (8) 20 Nicholas (8) 20 Jaime (2) 21 Micayla (10) 21 Jaycob (6) 22 Alexander (13) 22 Ethan (8) 22 Charlotte (4) 22 Fergus (3) 22 Logan (3) 22 Connor (2) 22 Kaia (1) 22 Oscar (1) 23 Fayth (6) 24 Phoebe (7) 24 Chloe (7)

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27 Katelyn (4) 27 Harper (3) 28 Max (2) 28 James (2) 29 Memphis (11) 29 Lachlan (9) 29 Samantha (3) 30 Brae (11) 30 Joel (11) 30 Abigail (7) 30 Bella (6) 30 Jack (6) 30 Kye (3) 31 Zoe (8) 31 Aleesha (4)

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### Celebrating Birthdays

If you would like your children (full term and prem) listed in the Austprem Ink newsletter, or to be added to the Birthdays page at <u>http://www.austprem.org.au/journey/</u> <u>superheroes/birthdays.shtml</u> please email <u>kirsten@austprem.org.au</u>





Beautiful clothing for premature and small babies

www.earlybirds.com.au 1800 666 550



1 Amee (2) 2 Robert (8) 2 Chloe (6) 2 Kahira (4) 2 Riley (1) 3 Kyla (3) 3 Charlie (2) 3 Aurora (1) 4 Samuel (4) 4 Dacian (4) 4 Mia (3) 4 Rohan (2) 5 Matthew (9) 5 Maxwell (4) 5 Rhett (4) 5 Marcos (4) 5 Bastien (3) 5 Jack (1) 6 Jayden (10)

6 Mollie-Maree (7) 6 Georgia (6) 6 Jeremy (6) 6 Allannah (4) 6 Chelsea (1) 7 Kate (11) 8 Brodie (6) 8 Jorrdan (6) 8 Alyssa (2) 9 Benjamin (13) 9 Elizabeth (6) 9 Sarah (1) 9 Alex (1) 10 Cameron (2) 11 Dylan (12) 11 Jayden (4) 11 Joshua (4) 12 Stacey (12) 12 Crystal (10)

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25 Benjamin (7) 25 Samuel (3) 25 Ryan (3) 25 Harry (3) 26 Daniel (11) 26 Chelsea (8) 27 Tayla (8) 27 Olivia (2) 28 Nicholas (11) 28 Jake (2) 28 Emily (1) 29 Saffron (8) 29 Hayley (5) 30 Michael (2) 30 Aidan (1) 31 Alexander (1)

### **Angel Babies**

Our Angel Anthony born 8th July 1994



Our Angel Jesse born 9th July 2004



Our Angel Andre born 17th July 2005



### Feel like chatting with members of Austprem?



Chats are a great way to get to know other members better. They are usually held on Thursday (not in January) and Sunday nights. A reminder is usually posted to the Austprem Forum the day before a chat, so check there for the exact time. The chats are held in the Austprem Chat Room on the mc2 site, so only Austprem members are able to attend. Chats times (for Thursday and Sunday nights):

 7:00pm
 WA

 8:30pm
 NT, SA

 9:00pm
 VIC, TAS, ACT, NSW, QLD

 11:00pm
 NZ

These times may change, so please check the Forum for reminders and updates.

Austprem Inc. Premature birth, babies and beyond



# You Name It Labels Fundraiser

Purchase address labels, stick on and iron on name labels for clothing, bottles, snack boxes etc, and heaps of other stuff, and support Austprem too!



Order at http://www.younameitlabels.com using our code <u>aiv0603</u> (all lower case, no spaces).

More details from: http://www.austprem.org.au/promotion/ you\_name\_it.shtml С

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AEROPLANE AIRPORT CHILDREN DISTANCE FLIGHT INFLUENZA KILOMETRES OXYGEN PASSPORT SAFETY SNACKS STOPOVER SUITCASE TERMINAL TRAVEL

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# Onations - Your support is greatly appreciated

Austprem Inc. is a non-profit organisation with no on-going funding.

If you would like to make a donation to Austprem Inc., please send your cheque or money order to:

Austprem Inc. P.O. Box 2157 Sunbury VIC 3429

Please include you name and address so that a receipt can be posted to you. Donations \$2 and over are tax deductible.



### Your Austprem Committee

President Leanne Uwland Vice President Catrin Pitt Secretary Kirsten Burkitt Treasurer Leanne Uwland Chat Host Coordinator Nadine Jones QLD State Rep. Catrin Pitt NSW/ACT State Rep. Liz Mattiuzzo VIC State Rep. Jessica White Austprem Ink Editor Kirsten Burkitt **Committee Members** Lorina Clements Narelle Kerry Gillian Menzies http://www.austprem.org.au

Austprem Ink

Premature birth, babies and beyond

ustprem Inc. asks that you please check with your doctor or health care provider as to what interventions are appropriate for YOUR baby!



### Copies of Austprem Ink

may be downloaded from: http://www.austprem.org.au/newsletters.shtml



### Benefits to all involved

### **Ritchies Community Benefit Card**

Buy your groceries, and support Austprem too! Simply nominate Austprem Inc. as your CB Card recipient and 1% of your purchase total will be donated to Austprem. The Ritchies Community Benefits Program operates in both Victoria and NSW. Victoria: Austprem Inc. CB number is 93772 NSW: Austprem Inc. CB number is 93807 More information:

http://www.austprem.org.au/promotion/ritchies.shtml

Disclaimer

Please note that Austprem Inc. does not recommend that any interventions are made to any baby or child without the knowledge and assent of the child's doctor or other health care provider.

Austprem Inc. cannot be held liable for the actions of any person based on information that Austprem Inc. has provided.

Suggestions and Comments?

newsletter@austprem.org.au

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