

# PRESS RELEASE

## “Preventing prematurity in multiple and subsequent pregnancies”

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Too many multiples are born too early: 1 in 20 sets of twins are born before 28 weeks and 1 in 7 sets of triplets are born before 28 weeks. Premature birth is risky, with 50% of babies at risk of long-term complications if born at 23 weeks, 10% if born at 28 weeks compared to the background risk of 4% for all babies born at 32 weeks and beyond.

AMBA’s Patron, Associate Professor Mark Umstad, will be presenting at AMBA’s National Convention. Mark will be talking about “preventing prematurity in multiple and subsequent pregnancies”. Mark said:

“Premature birth remains the major concern for women who are pregnant with multiples. It is also the most difficult challenge for health professionals involved in their care. The consequences of early delivery may be profound and lifelong. Despite their best efforts, obstetricians have made little impact in reducing the number of twins, triplets and higher order multiples that are delivered prematurely.”

Associate Professor Umstad’s presentation will review the reasons for prematurity and discuss the available treatment options and studies that are occurring.

Oriana Haddy is a mum of triplets that were born at 24 weeks. Three years after their birth, sons Amiel and Asher and daughter Aleeah are healthy and happy toddlers. Oriana said, “while the birth couldn’t be delayed because of an infection, a team of wonderful medical professionals performed miracles for our three little babies who were just meant to be”. “It’s a miracle that they all survived as we were told the survival rate was 50% for babies born at 24 weeks.”

AMBA and its annual convention are powered by volunteers who are parents of multiples. Convention provides an opportunity for members of clubs from around Australia to get together for a weekend, to hear what other clubs are doing and to listen to interesting speakers like Associate Professor Mark Umstad. This year see AMBA celebrates the 40<sup>th</sup> Convention in Ivanhoe, Melbourne.

The Australian Multiple Birth Association (AMBA) is a not-for-profit organisation comprising of multiple birth families. The organisation provides support, resources and education to multiple birth families from “those who know”. Primarily, AMBA’s member base are families with children of preschool age and under, however the school-aged and over numbers are growing due to the Association’s and clubs’ recognition that challenges of parenting multiples do not end when children start school. In many respects, they are just beginning!

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