

Tommy's Story by a Happy Mom

From the start I feared Tommy was going to be a repeat of Jaden, my now 9-year-old son. Jaden's short life began with difficulty nursing, trouble thriving/not gaining weight, severe asthma and allergies, including many trips to the ER. Thankfully because of finding out about Dr. Gillespie, we are seeing all of these things improve. I looked forward to the day when I could have another baby and start things off right by having my baby treated from birth to have things straightened out before they caused issues. When Tommy came along, I was really excited and hopeful. His birth went smoothly. I had him naturally at a birthing center with a midwife. He was very loud from the start. He did have some fluid in his lungs, which needed to be cleared out, making him raspy and loud.

When we got home, not knowing any different, I thought it typical to have a screaming baby. After the first week he showed signs of being a typical "colicky baby". Hearing such screaming 3 hours straight from my tiny little boy broke my heart. No form of rocking or soothing or nursing would help. He was actually hard to hold for how stiff his body was. He was like holding a surfboard. He always had his hands in fists would climb up me and scratch himself and me out of frustration. All signs were pointing to a repeat child. All I kept telling myself was that Dr. Gillespie would help.

Unfortunately we weren't able to get a visit until he was 6 weeks old. Up until that point I was literally counting the nights until we made our trek to Bird-in-Hand. A couple of nights after the first visit I remember it was Christmas eve, and it was the first time I noticed Tommy relaxed in my arms and awake during the night. It struck me how feeling him this relaxed, made me realize how bad and tense he had been.

At Tommy's 2-month appointment at the pediatrician, I explained his fits, and he was labeled a colicky baby. I was told, "There is nothing you can do". And the Dr. pointed out his right testicle that was enlarged. He thought he had a hydrocele and referred us to the urologist. The urologist confirmed that he had fluid and that it should go away by the time he was one or they would need to do surgery.

At Tommy's next visit with Dr. Gillespie he was 11 weeks old. He was very tight in his torso as well as his soft palate. After this visit, he started spitting up in large amounts. He was still waking up about every 2-3 hours throughout the night with screaming fits. It wasn't until after visit 4 that Tommy slept 7 hours straight. That was amazing.

Despite the 1.5 hour commute each way, we still couldn't wait for our next visit with Dr. Gillespie, Krissy, and Mike. Unfortunately because of snow we kept missing visits. With counting down the days until our visits this became so disappointing for us to have wait longer. Tommy was still screaming as well as waking from naps about 10 times screaming like he had been bitten or stung. Each time I would soothe him back to sleep only to wake a few minutes later.

Nursing was extremely painful. After going to the Breastfeeding Resource Center, I found that his latch was fine and he was nursing really well and gaining weight, but the pain continued. This lasted until he was 3 months old.

After visit 5 it was the first time Tommy didn't scream at first when he was being treated. His strain seemed to have lessened. This was a relief to me but I did not feel like his treatment was done. His nights were still a mess, and he was spitting up large amounts all over the place. He still woke from naps screaming after about 40 minutes but at least didn't scream during the nap. As with most visits Tommy was super fussy in the nights following the visit, resulting in screaming for about 2-3 hours.

At our 6th visit I felt in despair. I was sick, probably from being sleep deprived, and Tommy had had a horrible night previously. Despite me not feeling well, I knew the trek to Lancaster County would be worth it. Tommy still had strain although it was less. It was severe in his soft palate.

By visit 7, Tommy was still tight. I was a bit discouraged especially seeing others babies finish after only three visits and Tommy was now 4 months old. But I know there was no other option for relief for him. I had been down the path of the medical world. I know if I shared with the pediatrician about his reflux and spitting up, they would hand me a prescription. And I know that there was a good chance he will also have asthma and be a bed-wetter as Dr. Gillespie suggested.

The results after visit 8 were much more encouraging. Clinically he was quiet in Dr. Gillespie's terms. Although I explained he was still spitting up a good deal and not doing so well at night, waking 2-4 times. Two days following this visit Tommy slept on his own 10 hours straight. This was surprising that he could go this long without food. He also stopped spitting up, completely. It was like a switch had been turned off. This was very exciting. However exactly one week later, the switch was turned back on and his spitting up continued. It was 3 weeks between the 8th and 9th visit.

At the 9th visit, strain showed up in his jaw. For all three sessions Tommy fussed a good deal. That night Tommy slept another 10-hour night.

By the 10th visit Dr. Gillespie shared that he discovered a new area of strain in babies, in the back of the tongue. He found this strain in Tommy as well. By this time Tommy was taking 2 solid naps each day as well as falling to sleep peacefully.

Visits 11-12 were both showing strain still in Tommy's soft palate. This was difficult since he began to get teeth. Thankfully by visit 13 Tommy was finished his treatments at 8 months old.

Looking back I can see how far we both have come. Tommy is now 9 months old and is sleeping peacefully through his naps and solid through most nights. He hardly ever spits up. His right testicle has dramatically reduced in size and is visibly normal compared to the left. It no longer appears to be filled with any fluid. He is a healthy baby. He has not had one ear infection and has never needed to visit the pediatrician for a sick visit.

I am so thankful for his treatments and the dedication of Krissy, Mike, and Dr. Gillespie at Miller's in Bird-in-Hand. I am looking forward to seeing how Tommy continues to develop and how craniosacral fascial therapy continues to prevent the many issues that arose with my other son.