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### God Made My Cousin Special

God made my cousin special. My cousin's name is Gwendolyn Grace Mouat. On February 3, 2006, Gwen was born at Riverside Medical Center in Columbus, Ohio. On February 5, 2006, Gwen went home to start a new life with a caring family. That night, Gwen would not eat, she was restless and she had trouble breathing. My Aunt Jennifer knew something was wrong. Early the next morning my Uncle Tom and Aunt Jennifer took Gwen to the doctor. The doctor was very concerned; Gwen's temperature was only 94 degrees. He immediately sent them to Children's Hospital in Columbus. By the time they arrived at the ER, Gwen's temperature was down to 92 degrees. Gwen's illness was thought to be a virus or an infection she picked up when she was born. As the day went on she got worse. The doctors were at their wits end and were unable to put their finger on the cause of the illness. The next 12 hours would change my family's lives forever.

Gwen's whole system shut down. She stopped breathing three times before they were able to put her on life support. Her kidneys failed and the doctors gave our Gwen little hope. Some hours later they were able to stabilize her. The doctors finally discovered that Gwen had a genetic disorder disease called Propionic Acidemia ( P.A.). This disease doesn't let people break down protein and dangerous acid and toxins build up in their body. This could cause nerve and organ damage, especially in the brain. The doctors said Gwen had to eat special foods and must be fed every 4 hours. Last August, Gwen had a tube put in the side of her stomach. If she does not eat, then my aunt and uncle have to insert food through this tube. My Uncle Tom , Aunt Jennifer, and their son

Robbie, know that they need to give a lot of attention to Gwen because there is no cure for this disease right now.

Gwen is 8 months old now and is going to turn 1 in February. She is growing and looks and acts like a healthy child, but she has been in the hospital a few times already. We all pray for her to get better every day. My aunt and uncle also have held fundraiser events like a corn toss tournament and a fun run. They hope the money they raise will someday help find a cure for this disease. We all realize Gwen has a tough road, but we are glad God made her, and she is very special to us!!!!