

Jennifer Reeves Hodge

Like many of her friends, Jennifer Reeves has never given blood before. Until now. If you ask her why she's decided to start donating, her eyes fill with tears. One year ago she almost died.

Jennifer had a normal, healthy pregnancy. She and her husband Hank looked forward to the arrival of their first baby – a son. But as her due date approached – tests indicated that the baby was very large. The parents and doctor made the decision to induce. “He was sunny-side up, which is why his head was getting stuck,” Jennifer said. “And the size of his head – he was in the 97th percentile.” After several hours of strenuous pushing, she was moved to surgery for a Cesarean section. Everything seemed to be fine at first. Jennifer even got to hold her healthy new son, Colton.



Photo courtesy of Kristy Paeth, Remember When Photography

But in recovery, things started going very wrong. The nurses couldn't staunch Jennifer's blood loss. Jennifer was anesthetized again so doctors could search for the source of the hemorrhage. The bleeding continued. Jennifer's husband waited anxiously to see her. “It was tough for him.” Jennifer said. “He was rushing from the joy of having Colton to the fear of losing me. I always think of that Tim McGraw song, ‘Don't Take the Girl.’ That was the position he was in.” Twenty-seven pints of whole blood and several units of platelets kept her alive.

‘You know that people are in accidents all the time and they receive blood. But when it becomes personal – when it's you or your family, you're just so thankful.’

- Jennifer Reeves Hodge

Blood Bank of Alaska

