

Talisha Perrone holds her newborn daughter, Sophia at their home in Stoneham.

"I'd give an A plus, plus to the nurses in Special Care Nursery."

"This was my first child. I wanted everything to be perfect, but sometimes things don't work out the way you planned. I was in my seventh month of pregnancy and I was at work. I felt an odd discomfort in my

stomach. At first I thought it was just another symptom. But it did not go away, so I called my obstetrician to be sure. He was away but they quickly put me in contact with Dr. Donald Monteiro who was covering for him. His office told me to come in right away. When I arrived, Dr. Monteiro examined me and quickly made the decision to send me by ambulance to Melrose-Wakefield Hospital (MWH). I was actually in labor.

"I was very scared. I knew I was not to full term yet and I kept praying that everything would be all right. The delivery went fine, but my baby, Sophia, had a lot of complications with her breathing and other vital signs since she came so early. The medical team and my family made the decision to send her to Tufts Medical Center Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. I visited with

my daughter as often as I could once I was able. She was there for a few days and then she came back to the Special Care Level II Nursery at MWH. I had never been through anything as intense before. It was very touch and go for several weeks of additional care.

"I'd give an A plus, plus to the nurses in the Special Care Nursery for the outstanding care they gave to Sophia and I. Before I could take her home the nursing team set specific skills and requirements I would need to achieve to properly care for her. The early interventionist, special care nurses and other specialists all worked closely with me, building my skills and confidence, teaching me mothering skills, breastfeeding, cleaning, bathing and how to clear her breathing passages. The nurses helped me to become comfortable and more confident as a new mother. They made sure I could do everything correctly. I had the strong sense that they truly loved Sophia. The MWH Special Care Nursery is truly a very special place."

To learn more about Maternal-Newborn Services, visit www.hallmarkhealth.org and select "Programs."