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For Immediate Release

NBA Star Ja Morant and KK Dixon to Serve as National Promise Walk Co-Chairs

Dixon shares her birth story and how Preeclampsia almost took her life.

Melbourne, FL – August 6, 2020 – Kadre “KK” Dixon, the girlfriend of Memphis Grizzlies point guard, Ja Morant, was a healthy and athletic young woman who was having the model pregnancy – until she wasn’t. Around her 31st week of pregnancy, KK developed preeclampsia and almost died.

In honor of their daughter, Kaari’s, first birthday and the anniversary of KK’s traumatic birth experience, she is telling their story with one intent - **to educate other women**. She especially wants young black women to know the [signs and symptoms of preeclampsia](#) and what they can do about it.

To support this awareness initiative, she is launching her “*I wish I knew*” campaign and KK, Ja and baby Kaari together are the honorary chairs for the national **Promise Walk for Preeclampsia™**, the **Preeclampsia Foundation’s** signature fundraiser, which will be held virtually on **Saturday, August 29**, celebrating the Foundation’s 20th anniversary. The Dixon/Morant family are forming their own Promise Walk team and encouraging everyone to either form a team or join their team as they raise funds for the Preeclampsia Foundation, the nation’s only non-profit patient advocacy organization dedicated to education and awareness, improving healthcare practices, and catalyzing research around preeclampsia to find a cause and a cure.

Preeclampsia is a hypertensive disorder of pregnancy that affects about 1 in every 12 pregnancies in the United States. It is a leading cause of premature birth and maternal and infant death, taking the lives of 70,000 women and 500,000 babies worldwide each year. More startling is that black women are 3 to 4 times more likely to have a poor outcome due to preeclampsia than white women in the US. It occurs sometime after the twentieth week of pregnancy and can occur up to six weeks postpartum. Many of the [signs and symptoms](#), like swelling, headache and rapid weight gain, can be mistaken for normal discomforts of pregnancy.



Her Story

KK's pregnancy with Kaari started off perfectly. She ate well, attended all her prenatal appointments, and took care of her health. Then, around 31 weeks, she started to experience swelling in her hands and feet, rapid weight gain, and intense headaches.

Ja and KK's other family members were concerned too. KK did exactly the right thing and went to her obstetrician.

"I tried to be strong and fight through the discomfort. I figured some of it must simply be the effects of a pregnancy, but I know my body and I felt like something wasn't right, so I decided to go see my doctor," said KK. "I left a sample of urine, but other than that, I left the office without any explanation of what could be going on. That was my first mistake. I wish I had been more adamant and pushed my doctor for real answers."

Her symptoms continued to worsen. On August 7, Ja awoke to find KK experiencing violent seizures next to him in bed. Her blood pressure had risen so high that she began to experience eclampsia, seizures due to worsening hypertension.

"When I regained consciousness, my body and mind were so weak. I just prayed, 'Dear God. Please let my baby be OK. Please don't take us both from this world. I don't want Ja to be left all alone.'"

KK was rushed via ambulance to the nearest hospital, then transferred to a major medical center with a neonatal intensive care unit where her daughter Kaari was delivered via emergency C-section. KK fought for her life as her blood pressure continued to rise and her care providers worked to get her blood pressure under control. Following the delivery, KK was admitted to the intensive care unit and Kaari would spend the next six weeks in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU).

Thankfully, KK's story has a happy ending for her and Kaari, but she knows that it is not true for all young Black women like her. She credits Ja, who with his quick action got her to the hospital, helping prevent what could have been a tragic ending.

KK chose Kaari's first birthday to launch her "*I wish I knew*" campaign. With the help of the Foundation, she is sharing all that she wishes she had known about preeclampsia and the warnings she wants other women to heed. Read [KK's love Letter to Kaari and her complete story](#)



“I am not trying to frighten anyone. I believe knowledge is power. I want to empower you with the information you need to have the best possible outcome for you and your baby,” KK urged.

Join the family’s team [JustDolt4Kaari](#), or [form your own](#), to win prizes and participate in the walk from wherever you are on Saturday, August 29.

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About the Preeclampsia Foundation

The Preeclampsia Foundation is a U.S.-based 501(c)(3) non-profit organization established in 2000 to improve the outcomes of hypertensive disorders of pregnancy by educating, supporting, and engaging the community, improving healthcare practices, and finding a cure. We envision a world where preeclampsia and related hypertensive disorders of pregnancy no longer threaten the lives of mothers and babies. For more information, visit www.preeclampsia.org.