

INTO *the* HEARTLAND CAMPAIGN

SAMARA PEDIATRIC SURGICAL-EDUCATIONAL MISSION V
SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2007



PATIENT PROFILE

Child	Anastasia D.
Age	2 years 5 months old
DOB	April 22, 2005
Birth weight	5 lbs 8 oz (2kg 500g)
Current weight	19 lbs 12 oz (9 kg)
Home	Syzran
Mother	Svetlana, 25 years old
Father	Mikhail, 35 years old
Diagnosis	Tetralogy of Fallot
Open-heart surgery	October 1, 2007
Discharged	October 11, 2007

THE HOUSEHOLD AND THE FAMILY

In 2006, Anastasia arrived at the Samara Regional Cardiac Center from an orphanage. The sad truth is that in Russia today, because of severely limited access to modern heart care for children, medical personnel and family alike routinely advise the parents of a child born with congenital heart disease to abandon their child to an orphanage. The burden of caring for a seriously ill child is more than most families can cope with. Heart to Heart may never know the factual account of Anastasia's one-year stay at the orphanage, but we do know that Anastasia narrowly escaped an impoverished childhood in an institution, handicapped by a heart defect that is entirely treatable. She will now grow up healthy, loved and supported by her family.

When we interview Anastasia's mother, Svetlana, she describes the one-year separation from her child as "agony." The reunited family now lives in a two-room apartment in the same building as Mikhail's parents who, Svetlana explains, love their grandchild very much and are involved in her care.

CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT AND CONDITION

Last year when we met her, Anastasia was tiny, blue, and somber. This year, Anastasia is still tiny, elfin, and sallow. She has gained very little weight, so she is small for her age. Svetlana has been assured that she will gain weight after the surgery.

However, Anastasia was cheerful and joined the other children: it was lovely to see her alert and walking around the ward. Svetlana expressed her happiness that the Heart to Heart team had returned. "We wanted to have the best operation as soon as possible, after all she's been through." Svetlana was thrilled to learn that now, after five years of Heart to Heart support, the Samaran medical team can independently, successfully treat children born with Anastasia's congenital heart defect in this huge region of Russia.

After her open-heart surgery, Anastasia emerged from her three-day stay in the ICU looking pink and healthy. She was almost a different child. She smiled and played, evidently loving to fiddle with things that require small muscle coordination. Svetlana's devotion to her child shone through: she covered her face and wept with joy and relief.

Based on an interview conducted in Samara, in Russian, by Heart to Heart volunteer Rose Glickman, PhD.