

# INTO *the* HEARTLAND CAMPAIGN

SAMARA PEDIATRIC SURGICAL-EDUCATIONAL MISSION V  
SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2007



## THE HOUSEHOLD AND THE FAMILY

Katya's parents, Albina and Dmitry, have been married for ten years. They own a one-room apartment and a car. Albina thinks they are "something between rich and poor." Both of their fathers died young (The average lifespan for a man in Russia is 57.), but they have close relationships with their mothers.

The day before Katya's operation, Dmitry and Albina were frequently on the ward, but Albina was alone the next day. She did not want Dmitry to keep her company. "We make each other too nervous if we wait together." Until she actually sat down to talk with us, Albina looked deeply troubled and anxious. Katya's medical history understandably gives her parents cause for anxiety. As Albina spoke, she relaxed, "distracted" she said, by having someone to talk to.

## CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT AND CONDITION

### PATIENT PROFILE

Child	Ekaterina (Katya) P.
Age	5 years old
DOB	October 28, 2002
Birth weight	8 lbs 8 oz (3kg 854g)
Current weight	37 lbs 6 oz (17kg)
Home	Samara
Mother	Albina, 31 years old
Father	Dmitry, 31 years old
Diagnosis	SLL, DILV, s/p PA Band, s/p BDG with RPA Band, Sub AS, SVC aneurysm
Open-heart surgery	October 3, 2007
Discharged	October 17, 2007

Katya's heart defect was diagnosed in-utero. Five years ago, pediatric cardiac treatment was in its infancy in Samara, and the Samaran team was not yet able to perform surgery on newborns or infants – nor would they have been able to provide adequate post-operative intensive care for them. Katya's family was immediately referred to Moscow (500 miles away), where Katya was examined but not operated on. They went back to Moscow for surgery when Katya was 3 months old. Dmitry had to return to work, so Albina remained alone with Katya for ten weeks. At age 2, Katya underwent a second operation in Moscow. A problem arose while she was in intensive care and Katya's chest suddenly had to be re-opened for a third operation. Albina and Katya spent another two months in Moscow. Although the complex, expensive surgeries were paid for through a federal quota system, the cost of living in Moscow proved to be an additional burden for the family.

Now Katya is 5 years old. The procedure we perform will be her fourth—and we anticipate her last—open-heart surgery. Albina and Dmitry were overjoyed to learn that Heart to Heart's cardiac specialists would lead the operation and provide 24-hour post-operative care side-by-side with the Samaran team. This will truly be a "happy ending" to five years of heartache that Katya and her family have lived through. Anticipating Katya's likely need for a pacemaker within a few years, the team placed the leads for this while Katya's heart was open. This foresight will spare her a subsequent open-heart procedure.

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