

INTO the HEARTLAND CAMPAIGN

**SITE: TOMSK
DISTRICT: SIBERIAN
COLLABORATION LAUNCHED: 2006**

**APRIL 12-23, 2011
SURGICAL-EDUCATIONAL
MISSION 6**



PATIENT PROFILE

Child	Ludmila P.
Age	13 years 5 months old
DOB	October 22, 1997
Weight	Current: 103 lbs
Home	Abakan Republic of Khakassia 270 mi from Tomsk
Parents	Mother, deceased; Andrei, 35
Diagnosis	Mitral regurgitation with cleft in posterior leaflet of mitral valve
Open heart surgery	Mitral valve repair April 18, 2011
Discharged from PCICU	April 19, 2011

THE HOUSEHOLD AND THE FAMILY

Ludmila lives with her father, her 11-year-old brother, and her 86-year-old great grandmother on their family's farm in the city of Abakan. Ludmila lost her mother when she was 6 years old. Ludmila's brother is developmentally disabled and attends a remedial school. Ludmila also has an adult half-sister, who lives about 150 miles away.

Ludmila's great grandmother still manages all of the housekeeping, except for the laundry. Ludmila and her brother both help on the farm, which includes a bit of livestock and a vegetable garden.

CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT AND MEDICAL HISTORY

Ludmila's heart defect was only detected earlier this year, when Ludmila was hospitalized in Abakan for three weeks with a persistent flu. Pediatric cardiac specialists from Heart to Heart's sponsored site in Tomsk were conducting their annual outreach clinic in Abakan, and they diagnosed Ludmila's rare condition: mitral insufficiency due to her abnormal mitral valve. Until her flu, Ludmila says her only health problem had been shortness of breath, which she has tried to ignore, because she loves to play volleyball, soccer, and basketball. When asked, "Are you better than the boys?" she answers with a little smile, "Well, better than most of them."

Ludmila is an extraordinary girl – quiet, poised, and a bit reserved, but with a sense of humor. She is very courageous and uncomplaining.

CURRENT CONDITION

Ludmila traveled to Tomsk with her father, Andrei, at the end of March. The arduous train journey from Abakan takes almost 24 hours. Andrei was only able to stay with Ludmila for a day before having to leave her alone at the hospital. Ludmila keeps in touch with him and with her friends by cell phone; in the hospital, she studies her math and Russian literature or watches TV. The mothers of other pediatric patients, as well as the ward staff, are very kind and helpful, touched by Ludmila's situation.

Dr. Bert Litwin, Heart to Heart's pediatric cardiac surgeon on this mission, has extensive experience with mitral valve repair, fortunately for Ludmila. Her surgery – streamed live into an adjacent conference room – was a valuable teaching opportunity not only for the local Tomsk team, but also for the 35 visiting specialists from other institutions across Russia.

Ludmila's surgery was successful. The next day, she was able to be transferred to the step-down unit; she was discharged from the hospital nine days later. Ludmila's prognosis is excellent. Without surgery, she would have been at risk for increased shortness of breath and heart rhythm problems – eventually impacting her activities of daily living and leading to heart failure in early adulthood. Now Ludmila can look forward to a full recovery, a normal lifespan, and an active lifestyle.

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