



# Heart to Heart Global Cardiac Care

SITE: SAENZ NATIONAL  
CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL  
LOCATION: SAN JOSE, COSTA RICA  
COLLABORATION LAUNCHED: 2021

*Measurably Expanding Access Since 1989*

MARCH 8–19, 2022  
CARDIAC TRAINING MISSION 2  
PATIENT STORY



*“Sometimes when you talk to her, it’s like you’re talking with an adult. She loves having people over and conversing with grown-ups. She’s smart, active — her brain is bigger than her body!”*

– YENDRY AND ELIAN, CAMIL'S PARENTS

## HOUSEHOLD AND FAMILY

Six-year-old Camil lives with her parents and two siblings in Coto Brus, Costa Rica, a six-hour drive from the capital city of San Jose. The family makes an effort to eat dinner together every night after Camil’s father, Elian, returns home from managing two supermarkets. His wife, Yendry, dedicates her days to caring for their children and family home.

The region’s economy is heavily dependent on coffee production; there is little other commerce. Elian and Yendry express gratitude for what they have – Elian’s good, stable job and their “little car” which they drive from the countryside to San Jose so that Camil can receive treatment.

## CHILD’S DEVELOPMENT AND MEDICAL HISTORY

Camil was diagnosed with aortic stenosis soon after doctors detected a heart murmur at the time of her birth. Her mother describes feeling “a terrible anxiety.” She shares, “The first thing I thought was that my baby would die, that God was punishing me. But after calming down, I thought, no, God does not punish anyone.” Soon after birth, Camil underwent an emergency balloon aortic valvuloplasty.

Elian recalls that for the first several years after Camil was born, they would make the 12-hour round trip to San Jose every month for appointments at Saenz National Children’s Hospital. For years, the family continued to travel the long distance at least three times a year for Camil’s heart care. In February 2022, through a remote case conference, Heart to Heart and Saenz specialists jointly determined that Camil needed to undergo the Ross Procedure, a complex open heart operation.

## CURRENT CONDITION

On March 14, 2022, brave little Camil underwent the Ross Procedure. The joint Heart to Heart-Saenz team successfully reconstructed Camil’s heart and she was able to return home just days later. Her Ross Procedure was the first ever performed by the Saenz team’s lead pediatric cardiac surgeon, Margarita Camacho. Camil was not shy to voice her discomfort while recuperating in the PICU (in particular, her distaste for using a bedpan!), but her recovery was smooth and her big smile contagious as she left to return home with her parents.

### PATIENT PROFILE

Child	Camil P.
Age	6 years old
DOB	November 11, 2015
Home	Coto Brus, Costa Rica
Parents	Yendry and Elian
Diagnosis	Severe aortic valve insufficiency; s/p balloon aortic valvuloplasty (2015, Costa Rica)
Open heart surgery	Ross Procedure (March 14, 2022)
Discharged from PICU	March 16, 2022

*Based on an interview conducted in Spanish by Lucie Everett, Heart to Heart staff.*