THE HOUSEHOLD AND THE FAMILY

Fyodor lives in Rostov-on-Don with his parents, Svetlana and Vladimir. Vladimir has children from a previous marriage, but Fyodor is Svetlana’s first child. After the heartache of Svetlana’s three miscarriages, both parents were thrilled when Fyodor was born.

CHILD’S DEVELOPMENT AND MEDICAL HISTORY

Fyodor was diagnosed with Tetralogy of Fallot (TOF) in utero, when Svetlana was 26 weeks pregnant. Despite the difficulties of Svetlana’s pregnancy and the frightening news of their baby’s heart defect, both Svetlana and Vladimir remained optimistic that their baby’s heart could be repaired.

Fyodor was not cyanotic at birth, and he gained weight well as a young infant. After his first echocardiogram, when he was one month old, Fyodor’s diagnosis was further described as Double outlet right ventricle (DORV) with tetralogy physiology. Local specialists did not find cause for immediate intervention. At two months of age, Fyodor was examined by the visiting Heart to Heart team. Cardiologists agreed that he would eventually become cyanotic (turn blue) and require surgery, but at the time his condition appeared stable.

Several weeks later, Fyodor developed troubling symptoms. After two weeks of medical observation, Fyodor underwent his first surgical procedure at almost four months of age. The local surgeons elected not to risk performing a total correction, opting instead to place a palliative shunt to provide a stable source of pulmonary blood flow.

This year, the joint Heart to Heart-Rostov team undertook a complete repair. Fyodor’s heart lesion is much like TOF, both common causes of cyanotic heart disease. Fyodor’s case presented valuable teaching points, including: variations of TOF; diagnosing on echo; confirming data by catheterization; approaching anesthesia on a severely cyanotic infant; caring for challenging post-operative physiology (managing fluids, medications, and arrhythmias) in the PCICU; and, assessing efficacy of repair in cardiology clinic as he grows to adulthood.

Fyodor recovered well and was discharged from the PCICU three days after surgery. His prognosis is excellent – a chance to lead an active life, with normal life expectancy.

Based on an interview conducted in Rostov-on-Don in Russian, by Albina Popov, Heart to Heart staff.