



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



PATIENT PROFILE

Child	Josue V.
Age	6 years old
DOB	May 24, 2015
Home	San Jose, Costa Rica
Parents	Isabell and Rodrigo
Diagnosis	Pulmonary atresia, VSD, ASD; s/p BTT shunt (2015, Costa Rica), Glenn Procedure (Costa Rica)
Open heart surgery	RV-PA conduit, VSD and ASD closures, Glenn takedown (March 16, 2022)
Discharged from hospital	May 28, 2022

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

HOUSEHOLD AND FAMILY

Josue was adopted at two months of age after having already undergone one heart surgery. He lives with his parents and an older sister; his oldest sister has already moved out of the family home. The family lives in Alajuela, a province neighboring San Jose.

Isabell, Josue's mother, describes him as "Brave, loving, special – a warrior. He worries about others. When they admitted him to the hospital, we hadn't had lunch. They brought him something to eat, but he thought of me first. That's just who he is."

CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT AND MEDICAL HISTORY

Josue was born with pulmonary atresia – his heart lacked a pulmonary valve and struggled to pump blood to his lungs to be oxygenated. Josue underwent his first heart operation as an infant. Several years later he underwent another surgery, the Glenn Procedure. His mother recalls learning of Josue's diagnosis and prognosis: "They told us he would not be able to walk. It was so frightening. But here he is." Fortunately the prognosis did not prove to be true: Josue enjoys playing soccer and is a very active boy. Nearly seven years old, Josue is already older than most patients who undergo surgical intervention to correct pulmonary atresia. In the U.S., children born with this condition are usually diagnosed and scheduled for first stage repair in infancy. As they grow, these patients require repeated pulmonary valve replacement surgeries throughout their lifetimes.

CURRENT CONDITION

Josue was operated on by the joint Heart to Heart-Saenz team on March 16, 2022. His open heart surgery proved to be more complicated than anticipated; he was on the operating table for more than 12 hours. Josue's recovery was slow and somewhat rocky; Heart to Heart and Saenz specialists kept in close contact after our cardiac training mission concluded, brainstorming about his postoperative management for several weeks. His recovery faltered: weeks after the Heart to Heart team had departed, Josue underwent two additional procedures. In addition to implanting a pacemaker, the Saenz team had to perform an additional open heart procedure, reopening an atrial septal defect (ASD) to relieve pressure on his right atrium. Thankfully the Saenz specialists – cardiologists, intensive care specialists, and surgeons – worked tirelessly together to ensure that kindhearted Josue would make a full recovery.

After 10 and a half weeks, on Saturday, May 28, 2022, four days after his seventh birthday, Josue was discharged from the hospital. He was greeted by loving neighbors and relatives with music, balloons, and banners! During future Heart to Heart training missions in Costa Rica, Heart to Heart specialists will provide follow-up examinations to monitor Josue's condition. We look forward to watching Josue grow in the years to come!