

INTO the HEARTLAND CAMPAIGN

**SITE: KALININGRAD
DISTRICT: NORTHWESTERN
COLLABORATION LAUNCHED: 2013**

**SEPTEMBER 17–27, 2014
SURGICAL-EDUCATIONAL
MISSION 2**



THE HOUSEHOLD AND THE FAMILY

Albert's parents are from Ulyanovsk, a major industrial city located on the Volga River, over 1,000 miles from the Kaliningrad Federal Cardiac Center (KFCC). The family, of Russian and Tatar descent, needed to secure a visa in order to travel to Kaliningrad for Albert's treatment. The father, Ilya, works in banking and Valentina, Albert's mother, is on maternity leave. During the mission, we frequently see Valentina walking up and down the hallways with Albert in her arms. She is a lovely and expressive young mother, and understandably anxious about her son. Albert is a cherub of a baby, with chubby cheeks and a little bow of a mouth.

CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT AND MEDICAL HISTORY

When Valentina was pregnant, she was told that Albert's pulmonary artery was precariously small. At birth, he was diagnosed with Tetralogy of Fallot (TOF). This common heart defect (actually a constellation of four defects) afflicts almost 10% of all patients with congenital heart disease worldwide. Despite the prevalence of TOF, Albert's parents had difficulty finding treatment close to home. Initially, Valentina thought they would choose between a new cardiac center in Penza (150 miles away) or an established center in Moscow (500 miles away).

They had heard that the Penza Federal Cardiac Center had a very skilled lead surgeon (trained at Heart to Heart's flagship pediatric program in St. Petersburg). Nearby Penza also offered the advantage of involving no transportation or lodging expenses. However, Penza's lead surgeon had recently left the center, so Valentina and Ilya continued their search.

Through websites and online forums, they learned of Dr. Belov's new program at the Kaliningrad Federal Cardiac Center. Both the program and Dr. Belov are quickly earning a strong reputation nationwide. (Dr. Belov has participated in several Heart to Heart surgical-educational missions throughout Russia over the past four years.) Albert's parents arranged for him to be examined at the KFCC. Though treatment is free to all patients, the family had to absorb the cost of airfare and lodging. Valentina is grateful to her large extended family, all of whom contributed to make the trip possible.

CURRENT CONDITION

We examined Albert on our first day on the ground, confirming his initial diagnosis of TOF. The joint team agreed to operate on Baby Albert as soon as possible, and on September 22, he successfully underwent open heart surgery. Albert was extubated in the OR and discharged from the PCICU one day later. Over the next few years, he will be seen for annual follow-up examinations. Thanks to the timely and definitive repair, Albert may never need further surgical treatment. He should enjoy an active childhood and a normal lifespan.

PATIENT PROFILE

Child	Albert A.
Age	2 months old
DOB	July 1, 2014
Weight	Current: 14 lbs
Home	Ulyanovsk
Parents	Valentina, Ilya
Diagnosis	Tetralogy of Fallot
Open heart surgery	Complete repair of Tetralogy of Fallot September 22, 2014
Discharged from PCICU	September 23, 2014

Based on an interview conducted by Heart to Heart board member Karen O'Brien, PhD.