

Toddler survives; Daniel Estell makes it against all odds | Channel5Belize.com

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You first met Baby Daniel Estell last year in July when his family was in desperate need of financial assistance for his medical treatment. The child was born with a congenital condition called biliary atresia, which caused a blockage in the tubes that carry bile from the liver to the gallbladder. With help from the Hayward Charitable Trust, treatment was secured for the infant in Colombia. He's been back home and today News Five's Isani Cayetano got an update.

Isani Cayetano, Reporting

The story of Daniel Estell, an infant who was diagnosed with a rare liver condition a year ago, is a remarkable account of one family's will to save the life of a newborn. At seven months old baby Daniel was found to be suffering from an acute disease known as biliary atresia. Without an urgent liver transplant he wouldn't have made it past his first birthday. Fortunately, a parent whose child was also afflicted with biliary atresia suggested that Daniel be taken to Colombia where an operation to save his life would have been affordable.

Voice of: Ilda Guerrero, Baby Daniel's Mother

Ilda Guerrero



"I can't even tell you when [or] like how he got to where he is now because it's just, I mean, God does miracles and that's all I can say and the doctors in Colombia would say the same. They are like "this is a miracle baby because he was, I mean, he was the worst patient for them."

The toddler's transfer to a medical facility in South America came months after being flown to Los Angeles for treatment. While at the Children's Hospital the story of baby Daniel's struggle with biliary atresia made the local news in L.A. following a small protest organized by his family.

Relative of Daniel Estell (File: 2010)

"He is my first cousin's son, named after his great grandfather Daniel Estell. [He] looks a lot like him and it's about [a] humanitarian act it's not just family. We need as much support as we can get."

In a tearful testimony his mother Ilda expressed her frustration not being able to afford the cost of the surgery in the United States.

Ilda Guerrero, Baby Daniel's Mother (File: 2010)

"It's just so hard because money is in the way and there is nothing I can do, you know. It's nothing in the world, I mean it's beyond me."



Soon after, financial assistance came courtesy of the Hayward Charitable Belize Trust, a non-profit which reaches out to the people of Belize. With the assistance baby Daniel was relocated to Colombia where he



immediately went under the knife. His recovery nonetheless was equally painstaking.

Voice of: Ilda Guerrero

“He did everything well and then after the transplant he got pneumonia. He had a lot of complications after the transplant. It was like if everything that could go wrong will go wrong. It was like that with him. Anything that could have been a risk it could have affected him. Like he would, you know, he stayed in the ICU for three months after the transplant. It was really bad and it got to a point that they told me that he wouldn’t make it.”



Despite the seemingly insurmountable odds the child would survive the ordeal. It has been almost four months since he returned to Belize and according to his mother things are back to normal.

Voice of: Ilda Guerrero

“As to right now he’s doing good. His liver functions are perfect, to say, he’s really doing good and like the doctors in Colombia are so happy to see him doing so well after like being the worst patient but I mean that doesn’t stop there. He needs his anti-rejection medication which he is going to be on for I mean lifelong. So he needs that.”

Daniel’s name has been passed down in the Estell family for over five generations. His parents are both grateful for the help from the Hayward Charitable Trust to save his life. Reporting for News Five, I am Isani Cayetano.

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