

Meet Our Hero: Grace

Child's Condition: Imperforate Anus

Age: 3

Little Grace was born in Botswana. Moments after her birth, while doctors performed a routine check-up they noticed an abnormality. Grace's stomach was extremely distended and it appeared that she had an imperforate anus.

Imperforate anus is the absence of a normal anal opening and the cause is unknown. The local hospital did not have the expertise or equipment to treat Grace and she was sent to a larger hospital in the country. Once at the new hospital, staff examined Grace and discovered that her condition was more complicated than ones they had seen in the past.

Doctors were able to perform a colostomy, and while this procedure helped Grace for the short term, it was not a long term solution for this vibrant little girl.

Enid wanted her daughter to have a "normal life" and she refused to give up hope. She discovered hope when she met Dr. Georges Azzie, a renowned General Surgeon at The Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto, who was working in Botswana at the time.

Dr. Azzie informed Enid about the Herbie Fund at SickKids, that assists children from around the world, to receive highly specialized surgical treatment at The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids). Enid and Grace travelled to Toronto to reunite with Dr. Azzie. Once here, Dr. Azzie, along with other SickKids surgeons, was able to assess Grace and perform a life-altering surgery.

Grace's surgery took close to eight hours and she required specialized post-operative care in SickKids Critical Care Unit, but within weeks, her healing began. Enid and Grace remained in Toronto for several months before returning home to Botswana.

Enid is forever thankful to Dr. Azzie and all the wonderful staff at SickKids.

"SickKids is amazing, it gave us hope and it allowed my daughter to have a chance at a normal life. I am forever grateful to the doctors and people of this city for allowing us to come to Toronto through the Herbie Fund. It has changed Grace's life."

