

## BONE MARROW TRANSPLANT SUCCESSFUL



JERUSALEM...DOCTORS AT THE HADASSAH-HEBREW UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER DECLARE 20-MONTH-OLD TOMER LEVY CURED OF THALASSEMIA AFTER BONE-MARROW TRANSPLANTATION FROM HIS FATHER AMRAM. TOMER IS THE FIRST SUCH SUCCESSFUL RECIPIENT OF A BONE-MARROW TRANSPLANT FROM FATHER-TO-SON. TWO OTHER OPERATIONS, BETWEEN SIBLINGS, WERE DONE AT UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON MEDICAL SCHOOL, SEATTLE.

JERUSALEM -- Tomer Levy, a sturdy 20-month-old toddler, runs eagerly to his toy box to show a visitor his favorites. He appears healthy and normal in every way. His mother, Leah, dotes on him and his father Amram, exclaims, "Isn't he beautiful!"

"Only three months ago darkness had enveloped this family. Baby Tomer was found by doctors at the Hadassah-Hebrew University Medical Center to be suffering from Beta Plus Thalassemia Major, a fatal congenital anemia.

"The trouble started in Brazil, where my husband worked in the Israel Embassy," Mrs. Levy said. "Tomer looked very pale, and it was evident that something was seriously wrong. I returned to Israel and took him to the Hadassah Pediatrics Department, where they diagnosed the Thalassemia. He would need constant blood

transfusions and probably would not live beyond the age of twenty," we were told.

Then the doctors extended a ray of hope: After doing blood tests on Leah and the other two children, aged nine and four, they sent for Amram from Brazil for further blood tests. Finally, the Hadassah team concluded that if Amram were willing to donate his bone marrow to Tomer, there was a possibility of curing his son completely of the Thalassemia.

Amram takes up the story: "Of course, I was willing! Tomer and I entered Hadassah together, even sharing a room. Removing the bone marrow was like minor surgery, and the after-effects lasted about two or three days, after which I felt myself again.

"Leah helped to care for both of us for the first few days, and then I remained in the hospital with Tomer while she went home to the children."

Amram says, "Tomer was in the hospital for a month and every day saw an improvement. It's over four months since my bone marrow was transplanted into my son, and the doctors believe that he is completely cured. It is a miracle for which we will be eternally grateful to Hadassah."

Dr. Shimon Slavin, head of the Transplantation Unit at Hadassah, comments: "It is, indeed, safe to assume that Tomer is completely cured. Up to 100 days after transplantation of bone marrow there is a danger of rejection by the recipient and of Graft-Versus-Host Disease (GVHD), but the tests have confirmed that the transplant has been completely successful."

Dr. Eliezer Rachmilewitz, head of the Hematology Department of Hadassah which handles Thalassemia patients, added that he has two more candidates lined up for such bone-marrow transplants.

Thalassemia is a congenital blood disease in which the bone marrow produces blood cells with abnormal hemoglobin. This affects the blood's ability to carry oxygen to the tissues of the body and results in serious anemia, causing severe changes in all the major organs of the body. Until now there has been no cure for the disease. Sufferers have characteristic taut facial expressions and underdeveloped bodies. Few survive into adulthood. In order to keep alive, they are given from infancy blood transfusions once every three to four weeks. As a result of these transfusions an excessive amount of iron accumulates in the major organs such as the heart, liver and pancreas. Gradually these are severely damaged, leading to the major cause of death.

This is the first time that a transplant from a father to a Thalassemic child has ever been

effected. Two previous transplants, between siblings, have been successfully performed at the University of Washington School of Medicine in Seattle.

The Hadassah team led by Dr. Slavin, includes: Dr. Nili Ramu, Professor Gabriel Cividalli and Professor Israel Tamir, of the Department of Pediatrics; Dr. Ella Naparstek and Professor Eliezer Rachmilewitz, of the Department of Hematology; Dr. Chaim Brautbar, of the Tissue Typing Service of the Immunohematology Laboratory; and Dr. Zeev Weshler and Professor Zvi Fuks, of the Department of Radiology.

## The Minyonaires

BY HERB BROWN

The Minyonaires were flattered recently when they were approached by the campaign manager of an aspiring candidate for Mayor, who wanted us to help campaign for his man. When he was asked why he chose us, he said that he heard of the terrific job we had done, in the helping the Herb Kaufman affair a success at The Dunes, in fact his candidate was called upon to attend the affair, and marveled at the persistence and salesmanship. We turned him down of course. This is a matter of record, and is another feather in the cap of this group of dedicated men whose only ambition and purpose is to help Temple Beth Shalom.

The Minyonaires in helping with their friends are now recommending five men in the coming elections to the Temple Board. These men are the same who put The Dunes affair together and also revitalized the Mens Club from a zero membership to a healthy 97. They are all successful businessmen mostly retired. All have previous Temple experience in their respective home towns. Each one is willing to dedicate his services unselfishly as he did before. They know that one of the ingredients for a successful board is a hard working board of directors.

These men have the expertise, the time, and the willingness to serve the congregation the way they should be. A wise Rabbi tells this story.

"A lunatic set a house afire one night while the people were asleep. The fire spread rapidly to other houses. Each family ran frantically about, attempting to save its individual possessions. The wise Rabbi standing by remarked 'You are silly people. Instead of each one trying to save his own possessions why don't you all get together and put out the fire, so that it will not spread any further.' And so with all of us voting for The Minyonaires we will all have a winning team and a successful Temple.

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