

Update from Debbie

Missionary to Honduras
Thursday, July 22, 2010



Julia Roberts! Melissa Etheridge! And..... **MIKE LANE????**



What do these three have in common???? They are all patients of Dr. Robert Bard in New York! That's right! How do I know this? There were framed and signed thank you notes from them hanging on the wall of the examining room! Now, I don't know if they live in New York or not, but one thing's for sure: They can afford to stay there more than Mike and I! That is exactly the reason we flew to New York in the morning, had our appointment with the doctor in the afternoon, and flew back to Texas that night!

We arrived at La Guardia Airport in New York City around 1:00 p.m. And arrived at the doctor's office in Midtown Manhattan around 2:00 p.m. All it took was about 15 minutes for Mike to have the scan. Then the doctor told Mike, "I have good news and I have bad news." Well, I can tell you, that's not exactly what you want to hear when you're dealing with cancer! You would ***much*** rather hear, "I have good news and I have ***better*** news!" But... Unfortunately, that wasn't to be the case this time.

The good news: The diminished blood flow to the tumor was unchanged. This is good because blood feeds cancer. The less blood flow you have the slower the growth. Because of this fact, the doctor told Mike that he would rate it as a "slow growing cancer."

The bad news: The tumor was bigger... Quite a bit bigger. Six months ago it was 3 x 4 mm. This exam it measured 14 x 15 mm.

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So... The cancer is growing *slowly*... But the tumor is *quite a bit bigger???* Sounds a bit confusing and like a contradiction, doesn't it? We thought so too.

Here's the explanation we were given:

It's possible that, when Mike's PSA was rising while we were in Honduras, that was indicative of the tumor having more blood flow and growing at that time. When he changed his meds in June back to what he had taken a year ago and his PSA began to go down, the blood flow once again was diminished but the size of the tumor has not had time to subside yet.

The rest of the bad news: Dr. Bard needs to see Mike again in **3** months instead of the usual six. At that time, he will not only have the scan again, but also a "specialized high tech" MRI that he can get only in New York. Needless to say, that puts a damper on our plans to go home the last of August. But, as I've said before, *our* plans and *God's* plans are sometimes different! But one thing is certain! He's always right and His plans are best!

We've prayed about it and talked to our mission director and have decided it would be a better use of God's money to just stay in the U.S. Until time for Mike to have his exams rather than spending it running back and forth between Honduras and the States during the next three months. So, the next week or so will be spent trying to set up appointments with some of our supporting churches that we have not seen for some time. In the mean time, we are asking people to **please continue to remember Mike in your prayers.**

On another note, Jason and Arlen Stevens, the missionaries that work with us, returned to Honduras with their new baby and their young son last week. After landing in Tegucigalpa, and before going to La Esperanza where we all live, they took a trip to Choluteca. Choluteca is a town located in the south east part of Honduras near the border of Nicaragua. Arlen's family lives there and they wanted to allow them to see and visit with the children before heading home. While they were there visiting family, they all received several mosquito bites.

This is the time of the year when mosquitoes are very bad in Honduras. I'm sure that most of you know that mosquitoes can carry malaria, but you may not know about another serious illness that they can carry. It's called **dengue fever**, also known as **break bone fever**. Below is a partial copy of an email that I received a few days ago from the American Embassy in Honduras:

July 14, 2010

To: All American Citizens

From: American Citizen Services Unit, Consular Section

The U.S. Embassy in Honduras informs American citizens residing in or visiting Honduras that the Honduran ministry of Health has recorded over 17,620 cases of classic dengue and 594 of the hemorrhagic type. The disease has already claimed 21 lives in the country this year, 5 more cases are under investigation. The government reported that 85% of the hemorrhagic dengue cases were reported in the capital of Tegucigalpa. The government has initiated a massive fumigation effort in addition to public education outreach in order to contain the epidemic. Dengue fever is caused by a virus, which is transmitted by the bite of an infected mosquito. Dengue cannot be spread directly from person to person. There is no vaccine to protect against infection and no treatment to stop an infection.

What are the classic symptoms of dengue? The principle symptoms of classic dengue fever are: high fever (starting 3-14 days after bite and lasting less than 7 days); severe headache (especially behind the eyes); joint and muscle pain (especially in the lower back); bone pain (earning the name "break-bone fever"); and rash and mild bleeding (e.g., nose or gums bleed, easy bruising). Dengue hemorrhagic fever is characterized by symptoms consistent with classic dengue, however, when the fever declines, symptoms including persistent vomiting, severe abdominal pain, and difficulty breathing may develop. More severe symptoms may follow.

What is the treatment for dengue? There is no medication for treatment of dengue infection. Persons who think they have dengue should use pain relievers with acetaminophen and avoid those containing any non-steroidal anti-inflammatory (NSAID), such as aspirin.

Tuesday, during our layover in Washington D.C., we received a phone call informing us that both Jason and Arlen have dengue hemorrhagic fever. They are "stuck" in Tegucigalpa and staying in a hotel there. They wanted to try to make the three hour trip home because living in the hotel is getting very expensive for them, but the doctor told them they shouldn't be traveling at this time. Also, within the next couple of days, the doctors will be checking the two children for the fever. **Please, remember this precious family in your prayers.**

Note: Usually, mosquitoes that carry malaria and dengue are found in more tropical areas where it is very hot and humid. La Esperanza is located high in the mountains at 5,500 ft. Even though we **do** have mosquitoes, our cooler weather helps to guard us from those dangers.



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