



Tackling Sickle Cell Disease

Dear Friend,



It's hard to believe that these boys are twins. Read on and you will understand why the Ourganda medical teams are going to war with this debilitating disease. When two discoveries recently hit us, one right after the other, we knew it was time to act.

Discovery One: Bundibugyo is an epicenter for sickle cell disease (SCD). In fact, the WHO declared that at one time, the Bundibugyo District of western Uganda had the highest rate of SCD in the world. A local physician at the Bundibugyo Hospital sent us this note: "While those numbers have declined some with migration, the rate of SCD is still extraordinarily high. Unfortunately, the hospital here does not currently screen newborns."

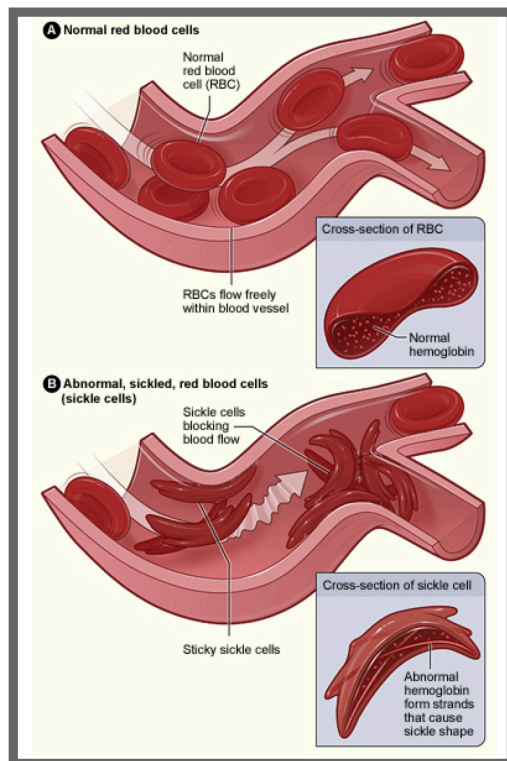
Discovery Two: A new and simplified testing method is now available. It consists of a small strip that looks a lot like a pregnancy test with a confirming colored line, if positive. It is obviously portable and is easily done in the village by our medical teams. The strips cost a grand total of \$1.40 each.

What is Sickle Cell Disease?

Here is the Readers Digest version: SCD is a blood disorder typically inherited from a person's parents. Abnormal hemoglobin causes red blood cells to distort into the shape of a sickle. These sickled cells are fragile and often rupture. They also block blood vessels which can cause organ and tissue damage along with debilitating pain.

What does SCD do to the body?

According to pubmed.gov, "SCD-related childhood mortality in Africa remains high with fewer than half of affected children reaching their fifth birthday." For children who survive, it causes delayed growth and clogs up the filtering action of the spleen which makes the person much more susceptible to infections. SCD predisposes individuals to severe malaria and increased malaria mortality, as well as reduced life expectancy from other complications.



What is Ourganda doing about it?

We started by obtaining 100 breakthrough tests from Silver Lake Research in Asuza, California. Our care team started testing children at six months of age. When a positive is found the child is then put on a daily dose of antibiotics which strengthens the child's ability to fight infection. The Ourganda team has already had some successes and very happy parents. Their children are not repeatedly ill. The treatment will be continued till age 6.



Here are the twin boys again. Vincent, medical clinical officer, sent us their photo, one who has gotten the Sickle Cell Disease gene from his parents and his brother who did not. (The smaller boy's name is Nason Isigoma. Please pray for him.) You can easily see the difference in their growth. Repeated infections have certainly not helped the smaller boy.

There are reports in the medical literature that children with Sickle Cell Disease grow better with a supplement of Zinc. We are investigating this further.

Another boy, Anode Agonzebwa, is 8 years old. According to Vincent, "His mother discarded him after watching him suffer for a long time in the hospital, so his grandmother is caring for him."



Just a few days ago, we shipped another 100 test strips via DHL Express to Bundibugyo. When 8 or 10 of us travel to Uganda again in November (assuming the airport is open by then), we will carry hundreds more tests with us.

We are thrilled with this breakthrough advance. We are delighted for this simple opportunity to have a profound effect on the lives of children and on the whole community. We are grateful to be in a position to help, having started with an outstanding team of medical professionals who take life-saving medical care into forgotten villages. Now this newer and inexpensive technology will allow us to save untold numbers of people from a life of suffering and misery.

Will you help us test more children? Thank you for joining us!



Ron Gladden
Ourganda Director



One Time Projects	Total Cost	Raised	Needed
Project CURE	\$35,000	\$2,500	\$32,500
Ourganda Campus (land)	\$45,000	\$29,000	\$16,000
Water Project	\$20,741	\$6,840	\$13,901

Ongoing Projects	Cost	Needed
Kits (Birthing)	\$12 each	hundreds
Kits (Hygiene, Kids)	\$10 each	hundreds
Water Filters	\$42 each	hundreds
Urgent Medical Surgeries	\$1,000 average per person	