



United Hatzalah of Israel

Highlights of the week in Israel

29 January 2009

Dear Friends and Supporters,

United Hatzalah medics live the phrase «expect the unexpected». Sometimes tools, training and experience can help. The rest of the time the medics have to reach deep inside and rise up to the challenge. This week I share with you the thoughts of a United Hatzalah medic who had to do so.

Have a great weekend.

Sincerely,

Eli Beer

Chief coordinator

In the thick of it...

It seemed like a routine call “Adult male, robbery victim lightly wounded, Location: Park Begin” United Hatzalah’s newest unit from Beitar/Gush Etzion was alerted. 10 minutes after the alert went out it was cancelled. United Hatzalah medic Yitzchak Eisenbach decided that he would check it out in any event. Even if just to help the robbery victim return to the neighborhood.

Initially, Yitzchak didn’t see any sign of the victim and thought the whole story may have been a false alarm. Some personal belongings on the side of the road caught his attention. Peering down the ravine, Yizchak noticed some movement. He immediately reinstated the alert and called for the special rope rescue unit.

Carefully making their way down the steep incline via the first rope medics stabilized the patient. The patient had been robbed of his car, wallet and personal belongings. He was viciously beaten and thrown down the ravine. The patient complained of severe back pain and assorted bruises. With the help of the fire department, police and MDA the patient was carefully evacuated up the ravine and ultimately to Shaarei Tzedek hospital in Jerusalem.



Life and Death

It is every medics nightmare, frantic banging on the front door in the middle of the night, “Come quick! Help!”. Leaping out of bed trying to shake the cobwebs of sleep out of a sleepy brain and at the same time trying to elicit some useful information from the panicky neighbors. Did somebody call emergency services?

I enter the house still in my pajamas and a limp, cyanotic 7 year-old is thrust into my arms. I barely recognize the formerly rambunctious child. Someone handed me speakerphone, I recognized the calm voice of another professional paramedic on the line. With one hand on the small chest starting CPR another holding the phone I updated the base that I have started single rescuer CPR and require urgent assistance.

In under 2 minutes the first of the local United Hatzalah medics arrived. I call for suction as the airway is visibly compromised. Other medics rapidly join the battle to save the child. One medic starts ventilations, one cuts away the interfering pajama top while another sets up the defibrillator. I step away from the child for the first time allowing a fresh medic take over chest compressions. A single shock is advised by the defibrillator. The United Hatzalah crew step back, watch with bated breath as the little child’s arms and legs convulse in response to the electrical shock. A hope, a heartbeat, a pulse. The pulse fades and CPR continues.

I look at the crew hard at work relieved that the cavalry has arrived and is working like a well-oiled machine. I try to reassure the family whose screams have faded to sobs while hoping to extract some information that could shed light as to why their little son is fighting for his life. They don’t have any relevant information to offer. I brief the MICU (Mobile Intensive Care Unit) crew that has arrived. They get to work, our teams integrate and the battle continues. The feverish pace of activity adds to the tension in the room.

I position myself to cycle back into the continuous rounds of CPR. IV in, cardiac drugs flow, heart monitor beeps and orders are swiftly implemented. Anyone not task saturated is focusing on the screen of the heart monitor, “Stop CPR! A stethoscope confirms it, we have a heartbeat!”. Wan smiles break across weary faces. The war is not over but a battle has been won.

The team rapidly prepares to evacuate, collects the lifesaving equipment and escorts the child to the ambulance. Someone brings down hot coffee for the weary United Hatzalah medics who remain behind. The sun begins to rise over the horizon and the stress of the past hour begins to dissipate.

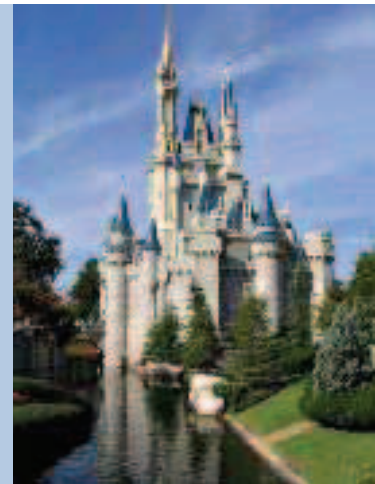
It was the message on the pager to call the base that did not bode well. A shaky phone call shattered the hopes. All those valiant efforts were in vain, the child had died. The United Hatzalah medics rallied around each other and around the family. We met again at the funeral home later in the day. Tears flowed freely from seemingly toughened medics as we gazed at the small body wrapped in a talit for his funeral.

We tried to comfort the family by letting them know that we did all that was humanly possible but it was they who comforted us. They said that our efforts were certainly not in vain. The fact that they saw how we left our warm beds to attempt to save their child’s life gave them such a feeling of togetherness and support. May the ones who console be consoled

Shorts

Need a vacation?

A change of pace? Click [here](#) to bid on exciting vacation packages and help United Hatzalah at the same time. A creative United Hatzalah sponsor has arranged an auction on our behalf. A broad range of exciting vacation packages are available. All funds are to be dedicated to purchasing personal armor for our volunteers in the south.



United Hatzalah medic Aryeh Deutsch, critically wounded by a terrorist at the start of Operation Cast Lead has regained consciousness, opened his eyes and recognized his family and friends.



Blood drive in Elad

Once again the United Hatzalah unit from Elad has endeared itself to the community with the recent blood drive it arranged with MDA and the local council. 140 units of blood were collected. The Mayor of Elad, Yaakov Gidan gave of his time and his blood for the effort.

**Thank you to all who have given us the opportunity to continue our work.
We hope you will continue to support us in the future.**

United Hatzalah is the largest emergency rescue volunteer organization in Israel which, working hand in hand with MDA has the endorsement of the leading Rabbis in Israel. **United Hatzalah** has branches in almost every city in Israel from the Golan Heights in the north to Eilat in the south.