



United Hatzalah of Israel

Highlights of the week in Israel

19 June 2008

Dear Friends and Supporters,

This week we travel between emotional and high intensity types of calls that United Hatzalah volunteers face on a daily basis. We also put you in the drivers seat of an ambucycle to try to give you a sense of what it's like racing down the highway responding to a call. Finally a warning, if you don't like snakes don't scroll down to the bottom of this newsletter.

Have a great week.

Sincerely,

Eli Beer

Chief coordinator

Heartfelt Treatment

It started as a routine call but what transpired was anything but ...

” 6:45PM 42-year-old with chest pains and breathing difficulties.”



Medic Ya'acov Yifrah raced to the scene, evaluated the situation, and recognized the patient. He realized that the single-mom suffering from MS (Multiple-Sclerosis) was not having an easy time under the best of circumstances.

Through her pain and high-concentration oxygen mask, the mother's thoughts were with her 2 year-old, she told the team that she would bring her toddler with her to the hospital. Yifrah would hear nothing of it and introduced himself, saying he and his family would be happy to care for the child at his home for as long as necessary.

The mother agreed and was able to worry about her own immediate medical concerns as she was rushed to Soroka-University Medical Center in Beersheba. Yifrach then picked up the sobbing child and carried him home.

United Hatzalah representatives coordinated all required documentation with Dimona's Social Services Department.

The Yifrah family bought the young child new shoes and clothes in time for Shavuot. The boy has even called Yifrah "Abba"

In an emotional visit at the hospital, the mother said, "You have truly healed my heart."

Miracle in the night

United Hatzalah medics were on the scene of a dramatic escape from a structure fire in Kfar Chabad. In the middle of the night a resident of Kfar Chabad, Moti Krichli, was awakened by the shouts of concerned neighbors. He smelled smoke, woke his young family and tried to head for the door but was forced to abandon that route when he was nearly overcome with smoke. With no other option, Krichli ran for the window with his 2 children in hand and shouted to the gathering neighbors.

Fortunately, among the gathering crowd of neighbors was United Hatzalah Medic Meshel Gelbstein. Gelbstein organized the neighbors to respond to the shouts from within the structure and established a soon to be needed treatment area.

From the second story apartment window, Krichli carefully dropped his 1-year-old and 2 year-old in the arms of his concerned neighbors. Krichli then assisted his 5 month pregnant wife to the windowsill and helped her jump to safety. With air getting thick with smoke, Krichli finally jumped as well.

Medic Gelbstein passed the oxygen mask around to the young family to assist with minor smoke inhalation and treated the assorted minor scrapes and bruises.

Additional, United Hatzalah medics arrived to reassure the parents and children that all was well. An MDA unit from the Ayalon district came to evacuate the family to Assaf HaRofeh hospital for further treatment and observation.

Before heading back to bed, Medic Gelbstein gazed back at the still smoking apartment, amazed at the miraculous rescue he just had the merit to be



Safety First

Racing down a winding road, weaving through traffic and avoiding debris from shattered vehicles on the way to save a life, it is more than just a good idea to be in top form.

With this in mind United Hatzalah Ambucycle Unit coordinator Zeevi Sofer designed a unique training course. For 2 intense days our experienced ambucycle drivers trained on closed-track and open-road driving.

The course focused on critical areas such as obstacle avoidance, skid recovery, and safe communication while driving. To assist the drivers United Hatzalah issued to all the drivers Bluetooth hands-free helmet mounted headpieces.

Zeevi Sofer explained that “Safety is priority one, with all the concentration required to safely navigate a high-stress emergency event we want our volunteers to have the best training and equipment available”.



Snakes on the plains and elsewhere

With the summer season upon us along with all its outdoor activities there has been a spike in the incidences of snake bites and scorpion stings. At United Hatzalah we are committed to public education and accident prevention. As such, here are a few prevention and treatment tips relating to minimizing the dangers associated with snake encounters.

Prevention Tips

- Keep the house clear of rats, mice and other snake prey
- Fix leaky taps (snakes are drawn to water)
- Try to minimize plants and tall grass in the garden. Plants are an excellent cover for snakes
- Fix window screens (snakes can climb)
- Keep a cat in the garden (cat's are one of the snake's biggest enemies)
- NEVER place your hand or foot under a log or rock without checking first

Emergency First Aid Tips

- Stay calm. The victim should not exert himself/herself
- If you see the snake, try to remember what it looks like
- Take off any jewelry or tight clothing near the bite quickly, before swelling starts
- Lift a bitten arm or leg so it is level with your heart.
- Clean the bite wound. Be sure to wipe in the direction away from the wound
- Do NOT bleed the wound
- Do NOT try to suck the venom out of the wound
- Do NOT put ice on the bite
- Do NOT approach the snake; don't try to catch it or to kill it

Thanks to www.snakes.co.il for their fine photos and research on the topic. Below are photos of the 9 poisonous snakes indigenous to Israel. Please note that many snakes look alike, in case of doubt err on the side of caution and seek immediate medical attention. You can roll your mouse (the computer one) over the snakes to see their Latin names, if you really want to get personal with them. Outside of a zoo, May this be the closest you ever get to these beauties.



**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.