

August 30, 2002

For Immediate Use

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Condition Report: Twins at Mattel Children's Hospital at UCLA

Maria de Jesus Quiej Alvarez has recovered from surgical procedure

(No hospital personnel are available for interviews. The next media update will be distributed by fax on Tuesday, Sept. 3.)

Maria de Jesus Quiej Alvarez has fully recovered from a non-emergency surgery performed by UCLA doctors Thursday, Aug. 29, at UCLA's Mattel Children's Hospital.

"Maria de Jesus has completely returned to her condition before the procedure," said Dr. Irwin Weiss, attending physician at the pediatric intensive care unit (PICU). "She is as lively as you'd expect a 1-year-old child to be." She laughs, eats solid food, holds her own bottle and interacts with visitors, he said.

UCLA surgeons had scheduled the two-hour procedure in order to clean Maria de Jesus' incisions, inspect how the scalp flap was healing and make reconstructive adjustments. After examining the skin flaps covering her head, surgeons moved the two pieces closer together in order to eliminate a small gap in her scalp. The defect was caused when part of the scalp tissue died after surgery — a common outcome that the doctors had anticipated.

Medical staff removed her sister, Maria Teresa, from a breathing ventilator on Tuesday, Aug. 27, and she is breathing on her own. She is recovering more slowly, as doctors expected, following her third surgery on Aug. 22 to remove a buildup of blood that developed in her brain during the initial separation surgery. She has opened her eyes and moves in response to touch.

Both Maria Teresa and Maria de Jesus remain in serious condition with stable vital signs in the PICU. UCLA doctors are cautiously optimistic about both twins' long-term prospects for recovery. Surgeons separated the 1-year-old Guatemalan girls, born joined at the head, during a nearly 23-hour surgery on Aug. 6.

-UCLA-

August 29, 2002

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Condition Report: Twins at Mattel Children's Hospital at UCLA Surgeons Perform Scheduled Procedure on Maria de Jesus

(No hospital personnel are available for interviews. The next media update will be distributed by fax tomorrow at noon.)

For the first time since she was separated from her sister, Maria de Jesus returned to the operating room for a non-emergency surgery this afternoon. UCLA surgeons had scheduled the procedure in order to clean her incisions, inspect how the scalp flap was healing and make any needed reconstructive repairs.

After examining the skin flaps covering Maria de Jesus' head, surgeons moved the two pieces closer together in order to eliminate a small gap in her scalp. The defect was caused when a part of the scalp tissue died after surgery – a common result that the doctors had expected.

Maria de Jesus appears to be recovering well from the separation surgery. Prior to today's procedure, she was alert and nurses often heard her laughing from her bed in the pediatric intensive care unit (PICU).

Medical staff removed her sister, Maria Teresa, from a breathing ventilator on Tuesday, Aug. 27. She is recovering more slowly, after a planned surgery on Aug. 22 to remove a blood clot in her brain that developed during the initial separation surgery. However, she has opened her eyes and is aware of her surroundings.

Both Maria Teresa and Maria de Jesus Quiej Alvarez remain in serious condition with stable vital signs in the PICU. UCLA doctors are cautiously optimistic about the twins' long-term prospects for recovery. Surgeons separated the one-year old Guatemalan girls, born joined at the head, during a nearly 23-hour surgery on Aug. 6.

-UCLA-

August 28, 2002

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Condition Report: Twins at Mattel Children's Hospital at UCLA One Twin Scheduled For Non-Emergency Surgical Procedure on Thursday, Aug. 29

(No hospital personnel are available for interviews. A press briefing is scheduled for 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, Aug. 29, following the surgery of Maria de Jesus. The briefing will be in front of the Mattel Children's Hospital entrance located on Tiverton Drive.)

As of 11 a.m. Wednesday, Aug. 28, both Maria Teresa and Maria de Jesus Quiej Alvarez remain in serious condition with stable vital signs in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit at UCLA's Mattel Children's Hospital.

Maria de Jesus is scheduled for a non-emergency surgery on Thursday, Aug. 29. A detailed inspection of all the post-surgical wounds will be made, as well as any repairs that might be needed. Thursday's procedure will be the first time Maria de Jesus will return to the operating room since the initial separation surgery.

Maria Teresa, who underwent a planned surgery Aug. 22 to remove blood from a subdural hematoma that occurred during the initial separation surgery, was taken off a ventilator on Tuesday, Aug. 27.

Doctors remain cautiously optimistic about the long-term prospects for recovery of the twins. The one-year old Guatemalan girls, who were born conjoined at the head, were separated at UCLA on Aug. 6 in a nearly 23-hour surgery.

-UCLA-

August 26, 2002

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Condition Report: Twins at Mattel Children's Hospital at UCLA

(No hospital personnel are available for interviews. The next condition report will be issued on Monday, Aug. 28.)

As of 11 a.m. Monday, Aug. 26, both Maria Teresa and Maria de Jesus Quiej Alvarez remain in serious condition with stable vital signs in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit at UCLA's Mattel Children's Hospital. Doctors anticipate a gradual, slow healing process for both girls and remain cautiously optimistic about their long-term prospects for recovery. The one-year old Guatemalan twins, who were born conjoined at the head, were separated at UCLA on Aug. 6 in a nearly 23-hour surgery.

-UCLA-

August 23, 2002

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Condition Report: Twins at Mattel Children's Hospital at UCLA

(No hospital personnel are available for interviews. The next condition report will be issued on Monday, Aug. 26.)

As of 11 a.m. Friday, Aug. 23, both Maria Teresa and Maria de Jesus Quiej Alvarez remain in serious condition with stable vital signs in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit at UCLA's Mattel Children's Hospital.

Maria Teresa remains on a ventilator but is being eased off of sedation. She underwent a 90-minute procedure on Thursday, Aug. 22, which allowed doctors to remove blood from an area in the back of the brain that was too sensitive to address in earlier surgeries. Maria Teresa underwent similar procedures on Friday, Aug. 16, and on Tuesday, Aug. 6, the afternoon of the initial separation surgery.

Her sister, Maria de Jesus, continues to be alert and active. Doctors remain cautiously optimistic about the long-term prospects for the recovery of both girls.

The one-year old Guatemalan twins, who were born conjoined at the head, were separated at UCLA on Aug. 6 in a nearly 23-hour surgery.

-UCLA-

August 22, 2002

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Condition Report: Twins at Mattel Children's Hospital at UCLA Maria Teresa Returned to Operating Room Today for Additional Procedure

(A doctor will be available to answer questions at 5:15 p.m. today at the entrance to the Mattel Children's Hospital at UCLA. Enter the grounds at Le Conte and Tiverton and go to the parking kiosk. No doctors will be available for interviews after the 5:15 p.m. briefing.)

Maria Teresa Quiej Alvarez, one of two conjoined twins separated earlier this month at Mattel Children's Hospital at UCLA, underwent a scheduled procedure for the final evacuation of an old subdural hematoma that occurred during the initial separation surgery. She is listed in serious condition with stable vital signs and in stable neurological condition.

Maria Teresa underwent a similar procedure Friday, Aug. 16, and on Tuesday, Aug. 6, the afternoon of the initial separation surgery. Today's 90-minute procedure allowed doctors to

remove blood from a different location in the back of the brain that was too sensitive to address earlier.

Her sister, Maria de Jesus, remains listed in serious condition with stable vital signs in the hospital's Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) and continues to be alert, active and fully awake.

Doctors remain cautiously optimistic about the long-term prospects for the recovery of both girls.

"Our overall confidence in their long-term prospects for recovery has not changed," said Dr. Jorge Lazareff, director of pediatric neurosurgery at Mattel Children's Hospital at UCLA.

-UCLA-

August 21, 2002

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Condition Report: Twins at Mattel Children's Hospital at UCLA Maria Teresa Returned to Operating Room Today for Additional Procedure

(Note to Editors: No hospital personnel are available for interviews. The next condition report will be issued on Friday, Aug. 23.)

As of 10 a.m. Wednesday, Aug. 21, Maria Teresa and Maria de Jesus Quiej Alvarez remain in serious condition with stable vital signs in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit at UCLA's Mattel Children's Hospital. Maria Teresa remains on a ventilator and under moderate sedation following a three-hour surgical procedure performed Aug. 16. Maria de Jesus continues to be alert and active. Doctors remain cautiously optimistic about the long-term prospects for the recovery of both girls. The one-year old Guatemalan twins, who were born conjoined at the head, were separated at UCLA on Aug. 6 in a nearly 23-hour surgery.

-UCLA-

August 20, 2002

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Condition Report: Twins at Mattel Children's Hospital at UCLA

(No hospital personnel are available for interviews today. The next condition report will be released on Wednesday, Aug. 21.)

As of 10 a.m. Tuesday, Aug. 20, Maria Teresa and Maria de Jesus Quiej Alvarez remain in serious condition with stable vital signs in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit at UCLA's Mattel Children's Hospital. The twins, who were conjoined at the head at birth, were separated Aug. 6 in a nearly 23-hour surgery. Maria Teresa remains on a ventilator and under moderate sedation while she recovers from a three-hour surgical procedure performed Aug. 16. Maria de Jesus continues to be alert and active. Doctors remain cautiously optimistic about the long-term prospects for the recovery of both girls.

-UCLA-

August 19, 2002

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Condition Report: Twins at Mattel Children's Hospital at UCLA

(No hospital personnel are available for interviews. The next condition report will be issued on Tuesday, Aug. 20.)

As of 10 a.m. Monday, Aug. 19, Maria Teresa and Maria de Jesus Quiej Alvarez remain in serious condition with stable vital signs in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit at UCLA's Mattel Children's Hospital. The twins, who were conjoined at the head at birth, were separated Aug. 6 in a nearly 23-hour surgery. Maria Teresa remains on a ventilator and under moderate sedation while she recovers from a three-hour surgical procedure performed Aug. 16. She is slowly growing more alert. Maria de Jesus continues to be alert and active. Doctors remain cautiously optimistic about the long-term prospects for the recovery of both girls.

-UCLA-

August 18, 2002

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Condition Report: Twins at Mattel Children's Hospital at UCLA

(No hospital personnel are available for interviews. The next condition report will be issued midday on Monday, Aug. 19.)

As of 10 a.m. Sunday, Aug. 18, Maria Teresa and Maria de Jesus Quiej Alvarez remain in serious condition with stable vital signs in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit at UCLA's Mattel Children's Hospital. The twins, who were conjoined at the head, were separated Aug. 6 in a nearly 23-hour surgery. Maria Teresa remains under moderate sedation but is growing more alert while she recovers from a three-hour surgical procedure performed Aug. 16. Maria de Jesus continues to be alert and active. Doctors remain cautiously optimistic about the long-term prospects for the recovery of both girls.

-UCLA-

August 17, 2002

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Condition Report: Twins at Mattel Children's Hospital at UCLA

(No hospital personnel are available for interviews. The next condition report will be issued midday on Sunday, Aug. 18.)

As of 10 a.m. Saturday, Aug. 17, Maria Teresa and Maria de Jesus Quiej Alvarez remain in serious condition with stable vital signs in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit at UCLA's Mattel Children's Hospital. Maria Teresa remains on a ventilator and under moderate sedation while she recovers from a three-hour surgical procedure performed Aug. 16. She has opened her eyes and looks around. Maria de Jesus continues to be alert and active. The twins, who were conjoined at the head, were separated Aug. 6 in a nearly 23-hour surgery. Doctors remain cautiously optimistic about the long-term prospects for the recovery of both girls.

-UCLA-

August 16, 2002

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Condition Report: Twins at Mattel Children's Hospital at UCLA

(Doctors will be available to answer questions at 4:30 p.m., Friday, Aug. 16, at the entrance to the Mattel Children's Hospital at UCLA. Enter the grounds at Le Conte and Tiverton and go to the parking kiosk)

Maria Teresa Quiej Alvarez, one of two conjoined twins separated earlier this month at Mattel Children's Hospital at UCLA, is in serious condition with stable vital signs following a three-hour surgical procedure performed Friday, Aug. 16, after tests overnight showed a bacterial infection in the lining of her brain.

Led by Dr. Jorge Lazareff, the hospital's director of pediatric neurosurgery, a medical team drained blood from her brain that could be aiding the infection's growth. The blood was remaining from a subdural hematoma, or build-up of blood in the brain, that occurred during the separation surgery.

Her sister, Maria de Jesus, remains listed in serious condition with stable vital signs in the hospital's Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU). Maria de Jesus now is feeding from a baby bottle and eating standard baby food. Her breathing tube was removed on Aug. 13, and she continues to breathe on her own.

The twins, who were conjoined at the head, were separated Aug. 6 in a nearly 23-hour surgery. Maria Teresa underwent a two-part, five-hour surgical procedure later that day to address the subdural hematoma. The condition of both girls was upgraded from critical to serious earlier this week as ventilators were removed and they began breathing on their own.

Both have grown progressively more alert and active in the days following the separation surgery. Doctors remain cautiously optimistic about the long-term prospects for the recovery of both girls.

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