



Christian Friends of Rambam Newsletter

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PEOPLE AT RAMBAM

- 1,058
Physicians
- 1,561 Nurses
- 952 Allied
health care
professionals
- 1,032
Household
and adminis-
trative staff

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Medical Miracles

Perform an internet search for the term “medical miracles” and you will get 100s of hits. They are defined as everything from the truly unexplainable recovery of a person to the amazing discoveries related to medications, surgical techniques, and other medical discoveries.

But the unexplainable is just that—unexplainable. In the past few months there have been several patients treated at Rambam Health Care Campus who underwent their own

“medical miracle.” For some it was the discovery of a potentially life-threatening disease—discovered by accident while being treated for something completely different. For others it was one of those billion in one chances where two different people happened to have the “cure” for each other and both were being treated at Rambam!

How did it happen? Was it really by “chance” or could it be that someone prayed and

something happened? Was it an accident or the good fortune of the patient to have a physician who takes no chances and checks everything thoroughly?

Sometimes we look for an explanation and lose the wonder of what has happened. But the people who have been healed or enabled to get early life-saving treatments are just plain thankful. They have been given a reprieve and for them, whatever the explanation, it remains a miracle.

From Accidents to Diagnoses

Whenever we hear about a car crash, the first question we ask is, “was anyone hurt?” Some people come out unscathed, but others die or suffer from life-changing injuries. And no one expects to be admitted for traumatic injuries and discharged with the diagnosis of cancer. In fact, 30-40% of the people treated for traumatic injuries are discovered to have previously undiagnosed medical problems, some of them life-threatening. Termed “incidental findings,” such diagnoses are more common than you might expect.

However, one night shift at Rambam Health Care Campus proved to be quite unusual. Not

one, but four different people—all admitted for traumatic injuries—were diagnosed with cancer! “Victims of auto accidents, falls, and different injuries come to Rambam, and we frequently see incidental findings,” explains Dr. Hany Bahouth, director of Rambam’s trauma unit. “But four cases in one shift is something we don’t see every day.”

Patients were admitted to Rambam’s trauma unit, one after the other for injuries sustained from an automobile accident, falling down, and a light stomach injury. All four people were found to have treatable

cancer and their lives were saved by their so-called “accidents.” Their accidents were actually blessings in disguise that led to diagnoses and treatment for their “incidental findings.”



Rambam’s trauma unit staff treating a patient. On the left, Dr. Hany Bahouth.

Photo by Ben Yuster- RHCC

Coma, Surgery, and a Wedding



Eli Azari with Dr. Yaakov Amsalem

Photo: Pioter Fliter

Eli Azari, 37, arrived at Rambam in 'extremely critical' condition following a stroke. Irreversible brain damage was certain. In the words of Rambam's head of the Department of Interventional Neuroradiology Dr. Yaakov Amsalem, "90% of patients arriving in Eli's condition die... A high percentage of the others enter vegetative states. The chance to recover from something like this is almost impossible."

Nevertheless, after consulting with a neurology stroke specialist, Dr. Amsalem decided to do the catheterization in Eli's brain to remove the blockage and restore oxygen supply to the brain. Although the operation was successful, doctors remained pessimistic. To their surprise, Eli awoke the next morning; amazingly, he had sustained no brain damage. "We did everything we could medically, but there is no doubt that his quick recovery was surprising," said Dr.

Amsalem. "Aside from minimal damage to his vision and walking, Eli is unharmed. We would define this as a medical miracle."

Mr. Azari returned home and his wedding took place, delayed by only two weeks. "I don't remember much of what happened," said Azari. "I still don't believe that I made it through this. Thank God we came to Rambam."



Dr. Dan Levy Faber

Photo: Pioter Fliter

By the Books

Doctors at Rambam are often faced with difficult and complicated medical cases. In this case, an infant was born with such a rare disorder that one of the surgeons had only seen this condition once before. Another surgeon had performed a similar surgery—15 years previously. Information on the child's rare condition was finally

unearthed in a 30 year-old medical text.

The child underwent a two-hour operation exactly one month after his birth. According to Dr. Levy Faber, the child will live a normal life despite his rare disorder. "When I opened the baby's chest to operate, his heart jumped into his chest. This is not something you see every

day," says Dr. Levy Faber. "At this young age the bones are very flexible and the baby can grow normally. It is amazing to see such a rare case and be part of treatment that will enter the history books."

After a one-week hospitalization, the child was released to go home in good condition.



David Ben-Yair (left) and Mohamed Akrat (right) at Rambam

Photo: Pioter Fliter

The Power of Giving

Recently, 32-year old Mohamed Akrat turned to Rambam for help. He needed a kidney transplant. His wife, Rasha, was willing to donate her kidney to save Mohamed's life, but sadly, it was not compatible with his blood type and tissues. Another man, 57-year-old David Ben-Yair also being treated at Rambam was also in need of a

kidney. David's son, Shmuel, wanted to donate his kidney to his father. Shmuel's kidney was not compatible either.

Imagine the amazement of all involved here at Rambam when it was found that Rasha's kidney was compatible with David, and Shmuel's kidney was compatible with Mohamed!

An Arab wife and a Jewish son each donated a kidney to save each other's respective family members. David and Mohamed are now sharing a room at Rambam, recovering from their kidney transplantation, and doing well.

[Watch the YouTube Movie](#)

Magician or Physician?

Around the age of 11, I began to set my eye on becoming a physician, but long before that I wanted to be a magician. The change in aim seemed natural to me. On the surface, I thought both physicians and magicians had much in common. Both bring about change; both never really resort to the supernatural, rather they use variable combinations of art and science to produce a seemingly “magical” result. Throughout history, sick people have turned to both magicians and physicians when all else failed. And both have “secret” knowledge or wisdom which may delight or relieve or help people.

However, our Bible gives Jews very strong admonitions against going to magicians and sorcerers, starting with a list of those to be avoided. For example, “avoid soothsayers, sorcerers” (Deut. 18:10-11); magicians are mentioned 16 times in the Tenach. Extra-biblical sources forbidding seeing magicians are indirect evidence that some Jewish people continued to see these diviners.

Yet, Jews have been obligated to see all miraculous events as directly attributed to God, and to see disease as well as healing as coming directly from Him (Deut. 32:39).

A key difference between magicians and physicians is that the one claims supernatural powers, while the other does not. Today, people sick or in dire straits continue to swarm to magicians. They hope for magical cures to heal ills for which science has not yet found an answer. Sometimes the magic-based healer is the last one to treat a person before healing is achieved, leading the patient to further believe in the power of magical healers.

Much of Moses’ greatness was in his modesty and faith. Moses stated repeatedly that his power was not supernatural, rather he was God’s instrument on earth to do His will. As physicians, we must internally and externally be aware of this distinction—we do not do magic. We can be instruments of His will and be the instruments of some amazing changes.

May we all be strengthened by the Source of healing and recognize our own limits. Our egos must not swell, we must not think we are, or pretend to be, magicians. We must allow the wonderful, sometimes mystical or amazing healings which come happen, and the honor of being the instrument of its delivery, without taking the credit to ourselves.

I delight in seeing a patient amazingly, seemingly miraculously healed from a life-threatening situation; sometimes it reminds me of the feeling I had as a kid when I succeeded in pulling off an amazing magic trick. On a deeper level, it is a great honor for any of us to be the instruments of His will in bringing healing to others.



The health and wellbeing of the body is part of one's service of God.
(Rambam [Maimonides], Hilchot De'ot 4:1)

Jesse Lachter, MD
Clinical Assistant Professor
and Gastroenterologist
Rambam Health Care Campus

*Language,
Culture,
and
Rambam*

Miracle—Nes—נֶס

The word for “miracle” in modern Hebrew is *nes* (נֶס). However, in Biblical Hebrew this word is translated as a banner (Exodus 17:15) and as a pole (Numbers 21:9). Yet the same word is used, *nes*, which comes from the verb *nasas* (נָסַס), meaning to gleam from afar or to see a sign from far off.

The tribes of Israel each had their own banner to identify them. That banner was called a *nes*. Interestingly, the verb *nasas* is related to the verb *nasa'* which

means “to lift up.” As a verb, *nasas* appears only twice in the Tenach, in Zechariah 9:16 and Isaiah 10:18.

What is the connection between these verses and the usage of *nes* in Exodus? The pole or banner that Moses raised up in the wilderness was a sign of life for the dying; all who looked upon the brazen serpent were saved from certain death.

It is not surprising then, that the *The Brazen Serpent by Benjamin West* From the BJU Museum and Gallery; reprinted under Wikipedia Commons License for reuse.

modern word for “miracle” in Hebrew is *nes*. Surely a real miracle is a sign to many of an occurrence beyond the ability of mere men. Please give thanks, with us, for the medical miracles (*nissim*—נִסִּים) that we have shared with you.





Rambam Health Care Campus

P.O.B 9602
Haifa 31096
Israel
Phone: +972-4-854-1285/2042
Fax: +972-4-854-2657
E-mail: cfr@rambam.health.gov.il

Creating the Future of Medicine

American Friends of Rambam Medical Center
www.aforam.org | info@aforam.org
212-292-4499

Canadian Friends of Rambam Medical Centre
www.cfram.ca | info@cfram.ca
416-481-5552

British Friends of Rambam Medical Centre
www.rambamuk.co.uk | anita@rambamuk.co.uk
208-371-1500

French Friends of Rambam Medical Center
amisfrancaisrambam.asso-web.com |
joelleabitbol16@gmail.com
609-580-268

Spanish Friends of Rambam Medical Centre
www.amigosderambam.org |
info@amigosderambam.org
609-580-268

Israeli Friends of Rambam Medical Center
galit@rmc.gov.il
+972-4-852-0670

For more information:



www.rambam.org.il



[rambamhospital](https://www.youtube.com/rambamhospital)



[Rambam Health Care Campus - Hospital](https://www.facebook.com/RambamHealthCareCampusHospital)



Ways to Give & Thank You

We depend on people like you to help us replace old equipment, build new facilities, perform research, and care for our patients. Your gift counts—whatever the amount. Click on the links below for more information on how you can help support the people of Israel via Rambam Health Care Campus.

Pray for Us and Tell Others About Us: Visit our [Christian Friends of Rambam Facebook page](#) often for prayer requests and regular updates about what is happening at Rambam.

Friends Organizations: Tax-deductible donations can be made via a Friends organization near you (listed above).

Giving: Please [visit our webpage](#) for more information about how you can

make a difference in the lives of the people served by Rambam Health Care Campus.

Thank you in advance for your prayers, concern, and gifts for the health and well-being of Northern Israel and the patients served at Rambam.

Information to Provide: For all donations, please tell us how you heard about Rambam (for example, at the Feast or via the Christian Friends Newsletter), and what your donation is for (children's hospital, the 2,000-Bed Campaign, etc.).

Thank you in advance for your prayers, concern, and gifts for the health and well-being of Northern Israel and the patients served at Rambam Health Care Campus.

See You There

You have encouraged us to start a new tradition. Rambam Health Care Campus will have a table at the 2013 Feast of Tabernacles, September 20–25.

Please be sure to stop by and visit us. We will have lots of new information and materials to take home to share your friends, prayer group, and congregation/fellowship.

We will also have a surprise just for you! Visit our table at the Feast, tell us you have been reading our newsletter, and you will receive a special gift. All we ask is that you tell others about us and keep us in your prayers.



Rambam's booth at the 2012 Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem.

We look forward to seeing you at the Feast!