

Enatanesh

Enatanesh* was unconscious when her family brought her to the hospital. Only later did she find out that her relatives had undertaken a five-day journey to bring her to the nearest hospital. Enatanesh had been too ill and exhausted to remember anything about the conditions under which her first child had been stillborn.

During the following days she found out that she had not only lost her child, but also her own health because of the birth. She was incontinent. During the contractions, which had lasted several days, the child's head had put so much pressure on the birth canal that a hole had developed between her vagina and bladder. Now, her urine was flowing out continuously through this aperture.

Enatanesh remained in the hospital for two weeks to recover, but there was no cure for the severe internal injuries she had sustained. She was released and walked the whole way back to her village in her weakened state. She suffered greatly from the incontinence, the inflammation of her urinary tract and the smell, which excluded her from social contacts.

She remained at home for five months, until she undertook an even greater journey with her uncle. She left for the Fistula Hospital in Addis Abeba, where she and her family hoped to receive help for her condition.

A number of months have passed since Enatanesh's arrival at the special clinic for obstetric injuries. She was operated, but her injuries are so serious that further surgery is necessary. She is now waiting for further surgery.

Tears of sadness and pain well up when she recalls the traumatic events of last year which completely changed her young life.

* name changed