

ELIMINATE

maternal/neonatal tetanus



A mother's grief

How do you cope with the loss of your son who was born healthy and within three days is very sick and would die a horrible and painful death? A death that could have been prevented if his mother had been vaccinated against tetanus.

During a visit to the Philippines last June, I had the opportunity to sit down with Alona Lamog and talk mother-to-mother about her tragic loss just months earlier. Her son was born on March 30, 2010, and died on April 3. When I sat down with her and spoke to her through a UNICEF interpreter, I asked her why she hadn't been immunized. She said she felt it wasn't necessary since she had two healthy children with no problems after their birth. So what was different this time?

The setting was the same for this birth except this baby was coming very fast. There was no time to even "think" about sterilizing tools. Bamboo was used to cut the umbilical cord. Hidden on its surface were tetanus spores it had picked up from the surrounding soil.

When asked if she'd get the vaccine now, her answer surprised me at first: "No." But then I asked why and she said she would not have any more children after losing her son.

Her next comment will live with me forever. She said if she would get pregnant again, she'd be vaccinated because "she had learned her lesson."

How can a mother live with that guilt knowing she could have prevented her son's death? Education by UNICEF and financial support by Kiwanis are the answers to *eliminating* the guilt these mothers hold in their hearts. >>>>>

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Links

- > [Uganda eliminates maternal/neonatal tetanus](#)
- > [Lao People's Democratic Republic on track to eliminate MNT](#)
- > [Region coordinators selected for fundraising campaign](#)
- > [Kiwaniis attends UNICEF partners meeting](#)

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Did you know?

Q: What country most recently eliminated MNT?

A: Uganda

THE ELIMINATE CHANNEL:

