

Beauty: “The hospital advised me to have my uterus removed, then I found out I was pregnant”

Beauty: “When I met Charles six years ago, I told him I was living with HIV and had three children, but he still wanted to marry me. We desperately wanted to have a child together.

Seven years ago, I lost my older sister to cervical cancer, and was worried it might happen to me as well. We only found out that she had cancer when it was too late and she had come home to die.

In September 2015, I had pain in my abdomen. I heard from a friend about the screening at Gutu rural hospital, so I went.

The test results showed I had lesions that couldn’t be treated at the local clinic. MSF took me to Newlands clinic in Harare and paid for the procedure. The nurses told me the results which recommended me to have my uterus removed, but I found out I was pregnant.

We both wanted it [a child], but my husband was torn because he didn’t want to lose me.

Throughout my pregnancy I had regular check-ups, and the doctor booked me for an elective caesarean to prevent any risks.

Our baby is two weeks old now, and we are both so happy. I’ve been advised to have another test for cervical cancer six weeks after my delivery. Now that we have a child, I’m fine with any course of treatment, even a hysterectomy.

My strong message is that every woman should get screened, there’s no shame in it. I would have stayed in the dark if I hadn’t been screened.”

Beauty, aged 36, Gutu, Zimbabwe, March 2017

CHARLES: “It wasn’t an easy decision, but we decided to have the baby, knowing the risks. I was still very worried. The nursing staff were very surprised that I went with her every time, and said we were a very loving couple. Men should encourage each and every programme that is supportive of women’s health. We benefit from these programmes too, because they save the lives of our families.”

Charles, Gutu, Zimbabwe, March 2017



Beauty at home in her kitchen, Gutu, Zimbabwe, June 2016 © Mélanie Wenger



Beauty talks to MSF nurse mentor Sister Tendai Chigura about the possibility of having a child before having her uterus removed, June 2016 © Mélanie Wenger