

When I travelled to San Sebastián, Lempira, Honduras it was with the impression that I would be gathering information about three patients, all deceased, who had been diagnosed with gastric cancer in 2009, 2012 and 2015. It was to my great surprise that one of these patients, Don Ilario, diagnosed in 2009, was still living. I believed that there had to be some mistake, that this couldn't be the man that I was searching for. Don Ilario lived in a small village called "El Sucte," more than five hours away from the nearest hospital in the city of Santa Rosa Copán where he was first diagnosed. I traveled far into the village, where there were no more than dirt roads to guide my path and public transportation was nonexistent. Habitants of the village had to walk at least two hours each dawn to be able to take the bus that would take them into Santa Rosa Copán.

It was a long and uncomfortable journey by car and a ten-minute walk to the home of Don Ilario where his wife graciously invited me into her humble abode. It was there, surrounded by colorful plants, chickens and ducks, that she confirmed her husband had been diagnosed with gastric cancer in 2009 and had an operation at the Hospital de Occidente. It was still early in the day and Don Ilario was working in the fields. As I was very eager to meet him, his wife agreed to call him and after a few more minutes of great anticipation, the man I had been searching for arrived. Don Ilario was a man who looked his 70 years; humble with darkened skin, years of working the land were apparent in his calloused hands. He showed me the scar from his operation and told me he felt very healthy; he had undergone endoscopy control in February 2016 and no lesions were found. His only complaint was it now he could only eat three tortillas with his meals, for his hunger could be satiated with very little food. At this I smiled and explained how important and inspirational it was for me that he was healthy and still living seven years after being diagnosed with gastric cancer.

*Aida A. Rodríguez*