

## Surgeon's Detach Twins Joined At The Hips

Brazil's conjoined twins Israel and Levi were separated successfully at Maternity Hospital of Goiania in a surgery that lasted nearly 10 hours. The 14-month-old boys were joined at the hip and abdomen, sharing intestines, a bladder and genitalia. The brothers both survived the surgery and are reportedly doing well. Israel and Levi had four legs but their shared lower bodies made the surgery the second-most complicated for conjoined twins. Twins with shared skulls create the most complex separation surgeries.

The surgical team of about 30 doctors, technicians and nurses separated the intestines, the urinary tract and the hips, while rebuilding both bladders. Preparations for the surgery began when the twins were born. In November, the family traveled to Goiania to begin the final phase before the operation, which involved using eight expanders to stretch the children's skin.

Now the children begin a complicated recovery stage in which specialists closely monitor the functioning of their organs and the emergence of possible infection. Doctors estimate Israel and Levi's chances of recovery at 50 percent. The surgery was subsidized by the state government of Goias.

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