Rare Triple-Organ Transplant Performed On Teen

Pediatric patient is one of three in the U.S. to receive heart, lungs and liver in one operation

July 16, 2010

Texas Children's Hospital in Houston has performed the hospital's first triple-organ transplant on a 16-year-old Brenham resident. The patient, Taylor Sherrouse, underwent a 13-hour surgery on Tuesday, June 22 to replace her heart, lungs and liver, which had been severely damaged by cystic fibrosis.

Taylor is one of only three pediatric patients in the country this decade to receive heart, lungs and liver in one operation. Taylor is recovering well and is scheduled to be discharged this week. To view a video of Taylor's journey, see: http://bit.ly/tripletransplanttaylor [1].

Jeffrey S. Heinle, MD, surgical director of Texas Children's heart and lung transplantation program, performed the heart-and-double-lung portion of the transplant, which lasted more than nine hours. Once the heart and lungs were transplanted, Dr. John Goss, director of the liver transplant programs at Texas Children's and associate professor at Baylor College of Medicine, performed a three and a half hour liver transplant.

"The triple combination of heart-lung-liver transplantation is a rare pediatric

procedure, in this country," said Heinle, who is also an assistant professor of surgery at Baylor College of Medicine. "We are extremely pleased with Taylor's progress. We believe this operation will give her an opportunity for a good quality of life and a chance to fulfill some of her dreams. Without the three organs, her long-term outlook was not good."

Taylor has been treated for cystic fibrosis at Texas Children's for 12 years. During that time, she has suffered recurring liver problems or respiratory infections that landed her in the hospital for weeks at a time. Doctors worked hard to keep her condition stable, but her lungs and liver continued to worsen.

In early November 2009, she was admitted to Texas Children's with a lung infection. Even though she hoped to be home by Thanksgiving, she was never able to leave the hospital. During those seven months, her liver and lungs were getting progressively worse with an added complication of a severe heart problem. Cardiologists diagnosed a restrictive cardiomyopathy, meaning that her heart muscle was stiff and chambers could not properly fill with blood. On June 11, doctors listed her for a triple organ transplant.

In the dawn hours of June 22, Taylor learned that three suitable organs had become available, and she was taken to be prepped for the rare transplantation.

"Taylor's recovery has been going amazingly well," said Dr. George Mallory, pediatric pulmonologist at Texas Children's and associate professor at Baylor College of Medicine. "This triple-organ surgery highlights the critical need for small donor organs in this country that can save more young lives," said Mallory. "We are grateful for families who donate organs, and our regional organ procurement partner, LifeGift. We work together to save children whose organs are so damaged that transplantation is the only life-saving option."

Texas Children's History of Transplantation Texas Children's Hospital runs an active transplantation program in heart, lungs, liver, kidney and bone morrow for pediatric patients. In 1984, Dr. Denton A. Cooley performed the first pediatric heart transplant on a 9-month-old female patient. She lived to be 13 years old. Since that time, the heart transplant program has grown into one of the largest and most successful program of its kind in the nation, averaging 12 to 15 transplants per year.

The Pediatric Liver Transplant Program, founded July 1, 2000, has performed 192 pediatric transplants since its inception. So far this year, 13 patients have been transplanted with 12 other patients on the waiting list.

The Pediatric Lung Transplant Program, founded in 2002 by pediatric pulmonologist, Dr. George Mallory and pediatric cardiothoracic surgeon, Dr. E. Dean McKenzie, is one of only five pediatric lung transplant centers in the country. In the eight years, the center has transplanted 101 patients, ranging from babies to teens. This year's count stands at 11 patients transplanted with six patients on a wait list.

In addition to transplanting single organs, Texas Children's has transplanted nine

other pediatric patients with double organs such as heart-lungs, heart-kidney and lungs-liver.

For more information on Texas Children's Hospital, go to www.texaschildrens.org [2].

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Links:
[1] http://bit.ly/tripletransplanttaylor
[2] http://www.texaschildrens.org