



Baby Fathima Filza and family with Dr Abhishek Yadav and members of the comprehensive liver care team at VPS Lakeshore Hospital, Kochi | EXPRESS

Infant gets new lease of life with liver transplant as mother turns donor

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Kochi

A six-month-old baby from Lakshadweep underwent a successful liver transplant surgery at the VPS Lakeshore Hospital in Kochi. Fathima Filza, daughter of Mohammed Fathahuddin A P and Sareena K C, was suffering from congenital liver disease that demanded an early liver transplant for her to survive.

Despite many hurdles, including the Covid pandemic and the travel restrictions to move out of Lakshadweep, the surgery was performed successfully by the Comprehensive Liver Care team at the hospital. Fathima's mother Sareena was the donor, and according to the hospital authorities, both the child and mother are doing well. They were discharged on Saturday.

Belonging to Androth island in Lakshadweep, the baby had symptoms of jaundice — including yellow eyes and dark urine — shortly after birth and was diagnosed with biliary atresia. In spite of a surgery when she was two months old, her condition worsened rapidly due to recurrent infections.

"Liver transplant in babies is a challenging and difficult procedure, especially in babies so

small," said Dr Abhishek Yadav, chief liver transplant surgeon and director of the Comprehensive Liver Care Institute at Lakeshore.

"One challenge we faced was the very small and undeveloped portal vein, the main blood supply to the new liver. The surgeons overcame this problem by modifying a stent originally designed for neck vessels in adults and placing it inside the child's portal vein during the surgery. The second problem was a variation in the hepatic veins of the mother which was overcome by using a piece of blood vessel harvested from a brain-dead donor at Thiruvananthapuram. She is also the smallest baby to undergo portal vein stenting which is only available in two or three centres across



Liver transplant in babies is a challenging procedure. Fathima is now the smallest baby to undergo portal vein stenting, which is only available in two or three centres in the country

Dr Abhishek Yadav

the country," he said. VPS Lakeshore is also one of the few centres in the world to have a success rate of over 90% in paediatric liver transplantation, hospital authorities said.

Along with Dr Abhishek, a team of over 25 doctors — including Dr Navaneethan Subrahmanian, Dr Fadal Veerankutty, Dr Dharav Kheradia and Dr Nita George — and other support staff were involved in the baby's treatment.

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EXPRESS NEWS

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