

8-month-old underweight baby undergoes liver transplant

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Kochi

DOCTORS at a hospital here have scripted an amazing feat by successfully performing a liver transplantation on an eight-month old underweight, malnourished baby who had underdeveloped lungs and suffered from recurrent infections.

When the baby, Rabeeh, son of Noufal and Jishabi, Nenchithadathil, Thirurkkad, Perinthalmanna, came to VPS Lakeshore Hospital here in July 2019, he weighed just 6 kg while a healthy child of his age would weigh 9 kg. Rabeeh had deep jaundice with

bilirubin levels 42 times the normal. He suffered from a rare condition called biliary atresia for which he had undergone a surgery earlier which could not cure him.

A team of expert doctors of the hospital led by Dr Abhishek Yadav evaluated him and decided that the only possible cure for him was a liver transplantation. "Liver transplantation in this baby was deemed very risky because in addition to the low weight, the child was also extremely malnourished, had underdeveloped lungs and suffered from recurrent infections," said Dr Abhishek.

The major challenges for the sur-

gery were finding a piece of liver to fit inside the child's belly and to rid the child of the ventilator after a 14-hour-long surgery. The surgeons surmounted the first challenge by removing a very small part from the father's liver and transplanting it into the baby.

"After the surgery, the child was required to be on the ventilator for 89 days," said the doctor. The family was all smiles along with the team of doctors and hospital staff who joined hands to undertake the task, when Rabeeh was finally discharged after celebrating his first birthday in the ICU, connected to a ventilator!



Baby Rabeeh with his parents

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Kochi: A liver transplant was performed in a city hospital on an eight-month-old baby, who weighed about 6kg. Normal weight of a healthy child would be 9 kg.

Rabeeh Noufal was not only underweight but also had underdeveloped lungs and suffered from recurrent infections.

In 2019, the child was brought to VPS Lakeshore hospital with jaundice, the bilirubin level 42 times the normal. He also suffered from a rare condition called biliary atresia for which he had undergone a unsuccessful surgery earlier.

A team of doctors led by Dr Abhishek Yadav evaluated him and decided that the only possible option was liver transplantation. "Liver transplantation in the baby was very risky as the child had low weight and was extremely malnourished, had underdeveloped lungs and suffered from recurrent infections," said Dr Abhishek.

The major challenge was to find a piece of liver to fit inside the child's small belly and rid the child of the ventilator support after a 14-hour surgery. So first, a very small part from the left side of the father's liver was removed and transplanted into the baby. "The second problem was much trickier as the child needed a long time to gain strength to breathe on its own after the transplantation due to his underdeveloped lungs. It was unthinkable to put the child on ventilator for so long," said Dr Abhishek.

So after the transplant, they created an artificial passage to the child's wind pipe by tracheostomy, to enable the child to breathe easily. The child is now fine and back home. TNN