

Laser surgery saves twins' lives

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A new laser surgery is being used to save the lives of identical twins suffering from twin-to-twin transfusion syndrome, or TTTS.

TTTS is a deadly condition that affects the fetuses of identical twins who share one placenta connecting them to their mother's blood supply. Each fetus fights the other to get enough blood to survive, ABC Primetime's "Medical Mysteries" said.

Dr. Anthony Johnson, a high-risk pregnancy specialist at the University of North Carolina Children's Hospital, said the only hope of saving both twins' lives is a new laser surgery to correct the blood flow between the twins. The laser is used to cauterize the blood vessels closed.

He told the TV program the surgery has to happen very early in the pregnancy, and it has to happen in the womb. One false blast of the laser could tear through the placenta and cause the babies to bleed to death.

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