

Man survives 16 days without heart

April 3 2008

Doctors in Taiwan say a 60-year-old man survived 16 days without a heart while awaiting transplant surgery.

National Taiwan University said it is the longest time someone has survived so long without their own heart or the benefit of an artificial heart, the Taipei Times reported Wednesday.

Chen Chi-chung was hospitalized in February in southern Taiwan with a serious bacterial infection that started as a cold. During emergency heart surgery, it was discovered Chen's heart had been destroyed by bacteria, the newspaper said.

Chen's entire heart was removed and he was put on an extracorporeal membrane oxygenation machine for 16 days until a donor heart was found. The heart transplant operation was conducted at National Taiwan University Hospital.

Doctors said Chen's heart problems may have been caused by a periodontal disease, the newspaper said.

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