

Double hand transplant taking place in Pittsburgh

May 5 2009

(AP) -- The first U.S. double hand transplant is taking place at a Pittsburgh hospital.

A spokeswoman for the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center tells the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette that patient Jeff Kepner went into surgery Monday morning. The surgery was expected to take up to 20 hours.

The 57-year-old Kepner is a native of Lancaster, Pa., who lives in Augusta, Ga. He told the Sunday News of Lancaster he looks forward to holding his 13-year-old daughter, who was 3 when he lost his hands and feet to a [bacterial infection](#).

Eight double hand transplants have been performed abroad. Last month French physicians performed the world's first simultaneous partial face and [double hand transplant](#).

Surgeons at the Pittsburgh hospital recently transplanted a hand onto a Marine who was hurt in a training accident.

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