

South Dakota man dies after donating part of liver

August 14 2010, By IVAN MORENO , Associated Press Writer



This photo taken Feb. 7, 2008, provided by the Arnold family, shows brothers Ryan Arnold, left, and Chad Arnold at a family cabin in the Black Hills of South Dakota. Ryan Arnold, 34, died Aug. 2 after donating part of his liver to Chad. Ryan Arnold went into cardiac arrest two days after the surgery and then fell into a coma. Chad is recovering well. Live donor liver transplants have been temporarily halted at The University of Colorado Hospital in Denver. (AP Photo/ Arnold Family) NO SALES

(AP) -- A Colorado hospital said Friday that it has temporarily suspended live donor liver transplants while it investigates the death of a South Dakota man who donated part of his liver to his brother.

The death would be Colorado's first of a live liver donor and the fourth in the country if it's ruled it was a result of the procedure, according to

the United Network of Organ Sharing.

The University of Colorado Hospital, which performed its first successful live [donor liver](#) transplant in 1997, is continuing other transplants but is "taking a step back" from live donor liver transplants following the death of 34-year-old Ryan Arnold of Watertown, S.D., a hospital spokeswoman said Friday.

"If there's something that needs to be corrected, we will correct it," spokeswoman Erika Matich said. The hospital has conducted 141 successful live donor liver transplants.

Ryan Arnold died Aug. 2, four days after the surgery in which he gave part of his liver to his brother Chad, 38, who lives in suburban Denver. Chad Arnold was home briefly but was readmitted to a Denver-area hospital to continue his recovery from a [liver disease](#).

"I think overall his attitude is to make his life count," said Rod Arnold, 42, referring to how his brother Chad is holding up.

UNOS spokesman Joel Newman said the living [donor liver](#) transplants are relatively rare in the U.S., where the procedure has been conducted 4,126 times since 1989.

In addition to an internal investigation, the hospital has also requested that physicians who are members of the American Society of Transplant Surgeons review the case, Matich said.

"Everybody at the hospital is very distraught, anybody who had anything to do with this wonderful family," she said.

Ryan Arnold went into cardiac arrest Aug. 1 and then fell into a coma, Rod Arnold said. The coroner hasn't determined a cause of death, he

said.

"He was a man of uncommon character and someone I looked up to," Rod Arnold said. "What he did for Chad was really just an extension of how he lived his life."

Rod Arnold said his brother "never really wavered" in his decision to give part of his liver to help his brother battle an incurable liver disease known as PSC.

"From the beginning he just said, 'I gotta do this,'" Rod Arnold said.

Shortly before the procedure, Ryan Arnold told KDVR-TV he wanted to give his brother the chance to live a long life.

"I'm healthy and I know I'll stay healthy," Ryan Arnold told the television station. "I'll recover and I want to see him do the things he wants to do, and spend time with his family, and I want to have him around for a long time."

Rod Arnold said that shortly after the procedure, Ryan went to Chad's hospital room and told him, "I love you bro', you're worth it. I believe in you."

Ryan Arnold is survived by his wife, Shannon, and three sons, ages 1, 4, and 6.

Ryan Arnold was an orthodontist in Watertown and was planning to take over his father's practice there. He loved "pretty much anything outdoors" and spent nearly every moment with his children, going to the lake on a boat and tubing, Rod Arnold said. He enjoyed hunting and fishing and was committed to his church.

"Our desire, if possible, is that what comes out of this is an awareness of the kind of man Ryan was," Rod Arnold said.

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