

Adult living donor liver transplants safe, study finds

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Desperately needed adult living donor liver transplantation is a safe surgery for the donor, according to researchers at Henry Ford Hospital.

The study looked at donor safety from a single center over a period of 10 years and found there were no patient deaths and no life-threatening complications requiring ICU care.

"There is a growing need for a limited number of available organs and more people are dying while waiting so we need to look at ways to continue to safely increase the organ pool," says Hemal Patel, M.D., a [gastroenterologist](#) at Henry Ford Hospital.

"In our 10-year, single-center experience, there was a 100 percent donor survival rate, and with most of the complications being low-grade, this is good news for the future of this type of transplantation."

The results of the study will be presented this week at the 62nd Annual Meeting of the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases in San Francisco.

Adult-to-adult living donor liver transplant, introduced about a decade ago, involves donation of right liver lobe usually from the recipient's relative or close friend. Living [donor liver](#) transplant provides a significant contribution to the organ pool and thus reduces wait-list morbidity and mortality.

The Henry Ford study looked at 54 living donor [liver transplants](#) performed at Henry Ford Transplant Institute between January 2000 and March 2011 and found that surgery for [living donors](#) is not a source of mortality, with most donors having only minor complications.

While no serious complications or deaths were noted, researchers found approximately 61% minor complications in 54 donors and 25% re-hospitalizations after surgery, all for minor reasons. Also noted was, 26% of those low-grade complications required either surgical (3.7%), endoscopic (11.1%) or radiological (5.5%) interventions. Other complications were self-limiting or improved with pharmacological interventions only.

Average length of surgery for donors was 6.19 hours; the mean length of hospital stay was 6.72 days; and only 7 percent of the donors undergoing surgery required blood transfusion.

All the liver donors in this 10-year analysis returned back to their lives and work.

"Careful donor selection, donor education and meticulous surgical and post-surgical care are necessary to reduce [donor](#) morbidity," says Dr. Patel.

Potential donors at the Institute undergo pre-operative medical and surgical consultation as well as psychosocial assessment.

Provided by Henry Ford Health System

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