

Radical surgery saves life of young mom

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A team led by Dr. Alan Hemming, transplant surgeon at UC San Diego Health System, has successfully performed the West Coast's first ex-vivo liver resection, a radical procedure to completely remove and reconstruct a diseased liver and re-implant it without any tumors. The procedure saved the life of a 27-year-old mother whose liver had been invaded by a painful tumor that crushed the organ and entangled its blood supply.

"During a nine-hour surgery the team was able to remove the basketball-sized tumor," said Hemming, professor and surgical director of the Center for Hepatobiliary Disease and Abdominal Transplantation (CHAT) at UC San Diego [Health System](#). "This is a surgery that carries a 15 to 20 percent risk of mortality. In this case, the patient would not have survived if she did not have surgery. This was the only way we could save her liver and her life."

During the procedure, the diseased liver was detached from the body, flushed with preservation solution and cooled to a temperature of 4 degrees Celsius. This allowed Hemming to carefully remove the tumor from the liver in a bloodless field while preserving vital structures. Hemming then removed the tumor which weighed as much as the liver itself. Once the tumor was removed, the vessels were meticulously reconstructed. The liver was then successfully reimplanted.

"It was amazing to learn the tumor was so big and growing inside me," said Clerisa Keirse, mother of three and Oceanside resident. "I am glad Dr. Hemming was here to perform the surgery and happy to be going home to be with my children."

Hemming specializes in all forms of liver surgery including split, living-related, and domino transplant procedures and has performed more than 700 [liver transplants](#) and 900 liver resections. He performs all aspects of hepatobiliary surgery including both open and laparoscopic liver resection for tumors, resection of the pancreas and [bile duct](#), and portal decompressive procedures.

Provided by University of California

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