

Turkish hospital performs triple limb transplant

January 21 2012, By SUZAN FRASER , Associated Press

(AP) -- A hospital in southern Turkey on Saturday was attempting the world's first triple limb transplant, attaching two arms and one leg to a 34-year-old man, the country's state-run news agency reported.

A team of doctors at Akdeniz University Hospital, in the Mediterranean coastal city of Antalya, was at the same time transplanting the face of the same donor onto another patient - a 19-year-old man. It would be Turkey's first face transplant.

"Today could be a day of many firsts for the medical world," the Anadolu Agency quoted Dr. Zafer Aydin as saying.

"We are hoping that the operation is a success and that it is a world first," said Aydin, who heads the organ transplant unit at the hospital in western Turkey where the donor's limbs were removed. "Two arms and a leg have never been transplanted on one patient until today."

The hospital in Antalya said an announcement would be made after the surgery.

Anadolu said Atilla Kavdir, the 34-year-old receiving the limbs, lost his arms and right leg when he was 11 after he hit power lines outside his home with an iron rod to scare away pigeons and received an electric shock.

The teenage face transplant recipient was burned in a house fire when he

was a baby.

The limbs and the face became available early on Saturday and the hospital began the operation at 3:15 a.m., Anadolu said.

The world's first double arm transplant was in Germany in 2008, while the first double leg transplant took place in Spain in July 2011.

More than a dozen face transplants have been carried out around the world, starting in November 2005 with a French woman who was mauled by her dog. The first face transplant in the U.S. was in December 2008.

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