

# Romanian baby born with stunted intestines dies

May 10 2012, By ALISON MUTLER , Associated Press

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In this March 27, 2012 file photo shows Baby Andrei, eight-month-old, the son of Roma under-age parents, in the arms of a nurse in the intensive care unit of the Marie Curie children's hospital Bucharest, Romania. Andrei, a Romanian baby born with virtually no intestines who confounded doctors by clinging to life and captured international attention for his fighting spirit, has died, on Thursday, May 10, 2012. He was nine months old. (AP Photo/Vadim Ghirda, file)

(AP) -- A Romanian baby born with virtually no intestines who confounded doctors by tenaciously clinging to life and captured international attention and offers of medical help, died on Thursday. He was nine months old.

In April, following an Associated Press article, people in Europe and the United States began offering funds and [medical expertise](#) to help Baby

Andrei get a complicated intestine transplant and discussions about arranging the procedure were ongoing.

But Dr. Catalin Cirstoveanu, the Romanian [pediatrician](#) in charge of the baby's care, said the attempts were too slow for the boy, who spent most of his life in the [intensive care unit](#) of the Marie Curie Hospital in Bucharest. Andrei's condition deteriorated after an operation 10 days ago, the doctor said.

"He fought for nine months, but it was too late for him," said his mother Cristina Mistreanu, 15. "We hoped a lot that the doctors would come from the U.S. to operate on him, but now there is no hope left."

Andrei's alert gaze and keen interest in the world around him appeared at odds with his frail, shrunk frame of just 2.8 kilograms (6.16 pounds). He grew less than one kilogram (2.2 pounds) since being born premature on July 27 in the small town of Tecuci to teen age Roma parents.

Cirstoveanu warned that the baby needed a transplant imminently. As his health was declining in recent days, Andrei had the surgery on his 10 centimeters (4 inches) of [intestines](#). A baby of his age normally has three meters (yards).

"He was no longer vivacious; he was apathetic; he got an infection; there were complications," he said. "It was impossible to tie the intestine and he couldn't eat. His liver was damaged."

Cirstoveanu had been in discussions with doctors in the U.S. to get Andrei a transplant, coordinating with Elaine McEwen, who heads Nobody's Children, a children's charity that has brought over children from Romania, Bosnia and Venezuela for surgery not available in their home countries.

Those who cared for Andrei in his short life said he was an inspiration.

"I will use this experience," Cirstoveanu said. "Andrei was a teacher for us, for this kind of complicated surgery."

"He had such a fighting spirit," McEwen said by phone from Windham, New Hampshire. "Andrei's life was not in vain. Something good will come out of this."

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