

First man who lived six months without heart mourned by Czechs

October 18 2012

Czechs on Thursday mourned the death of Jakub Halik, a 38-year-old fireman, who became the first human ever to have survived six months without a heart on artificial life support, but succumbed to liver and kidney failure.

Physicians treating an aggressive [cancerous tumour](#) in his heart removed it in April but were never able to find another compatible donor for a successful transplant.

"Up to now, no one the world over has ever survived such a long time in this kind of condition," the Dnes Czech daily said Thursday.

Meanwhile, the Blesk daily paid homage to "the man without a heart who was a man of great heart."

Black flags of mourning flew over fire stations across the [Czech Republic](#) Thursday as colleagues honoured Halik.

In August, eminent [cardiologist](#) Jan Pirk from Prague's IKEM [experimental medicine](#) institute had warned that finding a heart compatible for a "big lad" like Halek would be no easy task.

His condition deteriorated over the past few weeks with tests showing he was suffering from both liver and [kidney failure](#).

"We did everything possible to save him," Pirk said. Jakub Halik died

Saturday morning, but the news was only made public later in the week.

"This feisty fighter loved his family very much. His life's mission was to save the lives of others. Unfortunately, our ability to save his life were very limited," Eliska Breckova, his nurse at IKEM told Blesk.

Halik is survived by his wife and 12-year-old son.

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