

# Mexican boy who had massive tumor recovering

November 25 2014, by Russell Contreras

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An 11-year-old Mexican boy who had pieces of a massive tumor removed and who drew international attention after U.S. officials helped him get treatment in the southwestern U.S. state of New Mexico is still recovering after an 11-hour surgery.

And he got a surprise visitor while resting.

New Mexico Gov. Susana Martinez visited Jose Antonio Ramirez Serrano on Monday a week after the Ciudad Juarez-born boy underwent the risky procedure to remove what doctors called multiple cysts, spongy-soft tissue and a conglomeration of blood vessels .

Around a third of the watermelon-sized tumor was expunged and the boy now faces months of physical therapy, according to doctors at University of New Mexico Hospital in Albuquerque.

"In the operating room, we encountered more bleeding than expected," said Pediatric Surgeon Cynthia Reyes, who led the team with the surgery. But Reyes said the team was able to get the bleeding under control and the 97-pound boy is recovering in an [intensive care unit](#).

"He's had an amazing attitude during the whole thing," said Jimmy Windsor, Director of Pediatric Cardiac Anesthesia at the hospital.

In July 2012, U.S. Homeland Security Investigations assisted in picking up the boy and his parents from a neighborhood in Ciudad Juarez—one

of the deadliest cities in the world due to drug cartels.

Federal agents helped the family seek care for Jose after First Baptist Church of Rio Rancho members saw him during a missionary visit.

After stories and images of the boy went viral, First Baptist Church officials reported a jump in donations to help him raise money for the surgeries.

Martinez then got involved and sought an extended visa for the boy to receive treatment in New Mexico.

During her visit with Jose on Monday, the Republican governor softly touched the [boy](#)'s knee as she spoke to his parents in Spanish. She asked about his condition and asked his parents to keep her updated,

Though unconscious, Jose's heart rate rose slightly when told that the governor had stopped by to visit.

"He knows you are here," his mother told the governor.

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