

Spanish hospital conducts complex face transplant

March 30 2015

A Spanish hospital said Monday it has successfully carried out the world's most complex face transplant, reconstructing the lower face, neck, mouth, tongue and back of the throat of a man terribly disfigured by disease.

A team of 45 physicians, nurses, anaesthesiologists and other [health professionals](#) carried out the 27-hour operation in early February at Barcelona's Vall d'Hebron University Hospital, the hospital said in a statement.

"This is the first time that a transplant of this complexity is performed in the world," the statement said.

"The patient evolution after the surgery was successful, similar to any transplant patient at the hospital. Now he is already at home and only comes to the hospital to do routine checkups."

The patient, a 45-year-old [man](#) who does not wish to be identified, had suffered a condition called [arteriovenous malformation](#) for the past 20 years, causing a massive deformation of his tissues.

"The patient, due to the evolution of his illness, had important functional alterations, such a vision and speech problems, and the risk of severe bleeding that put his life in danger," the hospital said.

The man had been examined in several other hospitals, including the

Mayo Clinic and Harvard Medical School in the United States, which had considered him to be inoperable but the Barcelona hospital ruled surgery was his only treatment option.

The operation reconstructed two thirds of the man's lower face, including his pharynx, the hospital said.

The Vall d'Hebron University Hospital in 2010 carried out the world's first full [face transplant](#) on a man who suffered an accident that left him without a nose and deformed his jaw and cheekbones.

The hospital said the man now lives a normal life.

The first face partial [transplant](#) was when doctors carried out in France in 2005 on a woman who had been mauled by her dog.

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Citation: Spanish hospital conducts complex face transplant (2015, March 30) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2015-03-spanish-hospital-complex-transplant.html>

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