

Conjoined twin girls separated in Afghan first: doctors

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Doctors in Kabul have separated 15-day-old conjoined twin sisters—a surgical first for Afghanistan, medical charity Chain of Hope said Thursday.

Five doctors carried out the successful five-hour operation last Saturday to separate Ayesha and Sidiqa, who had been fused from the abdomen to the pelvis, it said in a statement.

The girls were born at their parental home in a village in the province of Badakhshan, and immediately brought to the local hospital, from where they were transferred to the French Medical Institute for Children, co-run by the Chain of Hope.

"The hospital teams can congratulate themselves today on this great success, and this new step towards bringing better care to the Afghan population," said the statement.

The girls were under close medical observation.

Also known as Siamese twins, conjoined siblings are [identical twins](#) who in rare cases, about one in 200,000 [live births](#), are born with their skin and internal organs fused together, according to the University of Maryland Medical Centre website.

About half are stillborn, and the survival rate is between five and 25 percent.

They develop from a single egg, which splits in the case of healthy twins, but not fully in the case of conjoined siblings.

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