

Arm transplant recipient says he can now hold fiancée's hand (Update)

October 5 2016



Retired Marine Sergeant John Peck speaks about his double arm transplant, Wednesday, Oct. 5, 2016 at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston. Peck, a former Marine sergeant who underwent a double arm transplant said Wednesday

that the best part about having arms again is that he can hold his fiancée's hand and pursue his lifelong dream of becoming a chef. (Patrick Whittimore/The Boston Herald via AP)

A former Marine sergeant who underwent a double arm transplant said Wednesday that the best part about having arms again is that he can hold his fiancée's hand and pursue his lifelong dream of becoming a chef.

Retired Sgt. John Peck , who lost all four limbs as the result of an explosion of a homemade bomb in Afghanistan in May 2010, underwent 14 hours of surgery at Brigham and Women's Hospital in August. The procedure involved 60 doctors, nurses and other medical personnel.

His arms are scarred and move awkwardly, but every day with the new limbs is better, he said at a news conference at the hospital. He is learning to dress himself, brush his teeth and feed himself all over again.

The first time he held fiancée Jessica Paker's hand after the surgery, he couldn't even feel it, but it still meant the world.

"That truly is a special gift," he said, adding later that he can now feel pressure when she squeezes.

Peck, 31, will probably need nine to 12 months of rehabilitation before the nerves are fully functional again, said Dr. Simon Talbot, the lead surgeon.

Peck, originally from Antioch, Illinois, now lives in Fredericksburg, Virginia. He said he's wanted to be a chef since he was 12.

"As a result of surgery, I'll be able to pursue my dreams," he said. He's

already started cooking but because he doesn't have full feeling in the new limbs, he has to be careful he doesn't cut or burn himself. He plans to visit France and Italy to hone his craft, he said.

Peck also thanked the donor, whose family wishes to remain anonymous.

"I will remember his selflessness and gift until the day I die," he said.

According to Johns Hopkins Medicine, hand and arm transplants have been performed on more than 85 people around the world. This was the fourth double arm or hand transplant performed at Brigham and Women's.

© 2016 The Associated Press. All rights reserved.

Citation: Arm transplant recipient says he can now hold fiancée's hand (Update) (2016, October 5) retrieved 8 May 2024 from

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2016-10-arm-transplant-recipient-fiancee.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.