

Uterus transplants are leading to healthy pregnancies

August 16 2024, by Ernie Mundell



Uterine transplants are relatively rare and recent—the first was performed in 2011, and to date a little more than 100 transplants have been conducted worldwide.

However, a new study finds that these procedures are often successful, leading to pregnancies and live births in 14 out of the 20 patients assessed.

"A successfully transplanted uterus is capable of functioning at least on par with a native, in situ uterus," concluded a team led by Dr. Liza Johannesson, of Baylor University Medical Center in Dallas.

Her team published its findings Aug. 15 in the [Journal of the American Medical Association](#).

As the researchers explained, uterus transplants are typically needed by women with what's known as "absolute [uterine](#) infertility," a condition affecting about 1 in every 500 women where the organ is either dysfunctional or absent.

In the past, these women would have had to resort to adoption or surrogacy, but 13 years ago doctors first transplanted a donated uterus into a woman with uterine infertility.

Since then, the procedure has gained acceptance, and by May of this year, 43 uterus transplants conducted in the United States have resulted in 33 [live births](#), Johannesson's group said.

Just how successful are these transplants?

The Dallas team tracked outcomes for 20 women averaging 30 years of age who opted for uterus transplant at their facility between 2016 and 2019.

Organs came from 18 living donors and 2 deceased donors.

In 14 of the women who underwent uterus transplant, the operation was

successful, the study found, and "all 14 recipients gave [birth](#) to at least 1 live-born infant."

Complications were common and occurred in 50% of these pregnancies, with gestational high blood pressure and preterm labor being two of the most common.

However, "[congenital abnormalities](#) and developmental delays have not occurred to date in [any of] the live-born children," the researchers noted.

Overall, [uterus transplant](#) was "technically feasible and was associated with a high live birth rate," the team concluded.

More information: Giuliano Testa et al, Uterus Transplant in Women With Absolute Uterine-Factor Infertility, *JAMA* (2024). [DOI: 10.1001/jama.2024.11679](#)

Find out more about uterine insufficiency at [Yale Medicine](#).

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