



NEWS



World's First Pig Kidney Transplant Into Human Successfully Completed

Science keeps winning! Scientists recently transplanted a pig's kidney into a human being without immediate rejection by the immune system.

A step in the right direction, the achievement could help ease the shortage of human organs for transplant by using animal organs.

Performed at the NYU Langone Health in New York City, the procedure used the kidney of a pig whose genes had been modified to get rid of a particular molecule which causes human immune systems to reject animal organs.

According to Reuters, the recipient of the pig kidney is a comatose patient who was experiencing kidney dysfunction. The subject's family consented to the pig kidney transplantation before she was set to be taken off life support.

How was the procedure done?

In the pilot phase of the transplant, the pig kidney was attached to her blood vessels but kept outside the body. This gave researchers access to the kidney for three days in case things were to go awry.

The kidney function after the transplant appears to be normal so far. Turns out the kidney is also making as much urine as expected from a kidney. In fact, Dr. Robert Montgomery, the lead researcher of the study told Reuters that it's working akin to a human kidney.

The most telling sign of the pig kidney working? The recipient's kidney function has become normal again. Earlier, the subject's creatinine levels were abnormal and now they appear stable.

Kidney shortage in India

Researchers across the globe have been working for decades to transplant animal kidneys into humans. Unfortunately, the immediate rejection has remained extremely high among recipients. With this new pig kidney transplant, things may be headed for a shake-up.

According to Narayana Health, almost 200,000 patients in India are awaiting organ donation with only 15,000 available donors. This gap could be filled with animal transplants modelled around this one.

Reference:

<https://www.indiatimes.com/technology/science-and-future/pig-kidney-transplant-in-human-552148.html>