



For the first time in history, doctors **transplanted** a pig's heart into a human.

The patient was 57-year-old David Bennet from Maryland, US. He was too sick for a human heart, so doctors at the University of Maryland School of Medicine used a modified pig heart in a **last-ditch effort** to save the man's life.

Earlier attempts at such a transplant failed; however, Bennet was doing well, and Friday's surgery showed for the first time that a modified animal heart could work in the human body without immediate problems. The seven-hour surgery was a major step in using animal organs for life-saving transplants; however, it's too soon to say if the operation will work, and the man's long-term chances of survival.

A US medical authority gave the doctors a special **dispensation** to perform the procedure, with the reason, that Bennet had a fatal heart disease, and he would have died otherwise.

Difficult words: **transplant** (to move a body organ from one living thing to another thing; the medical operation to move body organs); **last-ditch effort** (a final attempt to do something after many other attempts failed), **dispensation** (special permission to do something).

**Discussion Questions****Topic Talk**

1. Define the following words: *transplant*, *last-ditch effort* and *dispensation*
2. What unusual medical procedure did the 57-year-old David Bennet receive at the University of Maryland School of Medicine?
3. Why did the doctors use a modified pig heart instead of using a human heart in the transplant?
4. Was David Bennet the first man to receive a modified animal heart transplant?
5. What's the difference between this 57-year-old pig heart transplant and the earlier attempts doctors did in the past?
6. Why did the doctors receive a special dispensation to perform the procedure to Mr. Bennet?

Express Your Thoughts

1. What other modified animal heart do you know have been used in human heart transplant besides pig heart?
2. Why do you think doctors resort to using genetically modified animal heart in their surgeries?
3. If you were a terminally ill patient and needed an organ transplant immediately but there were non available except for a modified animal organ, would you agree to do the transplant?