Massachusetts Cancer Survivor Gets First Penis Transplant in the United States

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For combat veterans, cancer patients and accident victims who suffer genital injuries there's a procedure that can help restore their health, confidence and sex lives. A man who lost his reproductive organ to cancer received a new penis when a medical team at Massachusetts General Hospital replaced his genitalia, The New York Times reports.

Under the watchful eyes of nearly a dozen surgeons, and 30 other health care workers, Thomas Manning, age 64, underwent the 15-hour transplant operation. Doctors attached the organ, which came from a deceased donor, by connecting four small arteries, two veins and several nerves between Manning's body and the penis. The physicians said if Manning recovers as planned, normal urination should be possible within a few weeks, and sexual function should return during the next few months.

Currently, war veterans are the major focus of penis transplant research programs in the United States. According to the U.S. Department of Defense, more than 1,300 male soldiers suffered so-called genitourinary injuries, or GU trauma, in Iraq or Afghanistan between 2001 and 2013.

In addition, cancer and trauma patients are also eligible for the life-changing surgery. But for now, penis transplants won't be offered to transgender people, researchers said.

Manning's doctors cautioned that they're still waiting to see how he recovers during the next few months before they declare the penis transplant successful. Doctors said the criteria they'll use to confirm success will take into account Manning's ability to urinate and participate in sexual activity, as well as how satisfied he is using his new organ.

Every man wants his Johnson to be up and running, yet few men are informed about common genital disorders that can affect them. Click here for a list of the ones doctors most frequently cite.

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