

Man fights off death with wife's liver

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Ahmedabad: City-based businessman Sunil Patel, 47, was given just a few months to live after he was diagnosed with last stage of deadly liver disease. On Wednesday, he was ready to go home, his wife's liver growing inside him.

In the first ever living donor liver transplant in Gujarat, nearly 65 per cent of the liver of Jigna Patel was transplanted into the body of her husband Sunil at Apollo Hospital. Chief liver transplant surgeon at Apollo Hospital Dr Chirag Desai said that the transplant was a 16-hour complex surgery.

"We had to be extremely careful not just about Sunil's operation but also Jigna's safety," Desai said. The surgery was done on July 16 and 20. Days later doctors allowed the couple to go home. "Liver is the only organ which has the capacity to regenerate. It has started



Sunil Patel (extreme right) with his wife and doctor

regenerating in both Sunil and Jigna. While Sunil will have to take immunosuppressant drugs for life, Jigna can expect complete regeneration of her organ in next six to 10 weeks," said Desai.

A few months back, Sunil started having high fever. Detailed medical investigations re-

vealed that his liver function had started failing. He was put on medication but doctors told him that liver transplant was the only way to save his life. Since Jigna's blood group matched with her husband, she was able to donate part of her organ to save her husband's life. "My wife has given me a second life. I am so grateful to her for her love," said Sunil. Jigna said that she was extremely concerned about the failing health of her husband and jumped at the first opportunity to save him. The surgery cost the couple Rs 19 lakh.

Liver transplant was first started at Institute of Kidney Diseases and Research Centre (IKDRC) but here cadaver liver taken from a brain dead patient was used. CEO of Apollo Hospitals at Ahmedabad Dr Praful Pawar said that the availability of this facility would be of immense benefit to the people of Gujarat.