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Description

Just three days after becoming the first recipient of an artificial heart, 47-year-old Haskell Karp has received a human heart transplant. Karp would only survive 36 hours with the new heart. The pioneering surgery by Dr. Denton Cooley at St. Luke's Hospital would also spark a decades long feud with his colleague, Dr. Michael DeBakey, because Cooley had not been authorized to use the artificial heart.

Keywords

Denton Cooley, Heart Transplant, Houston, Texas, Heart, Transplants, Artificial Heart, Plastic, Surgeon, Surgery, Operation, Barbara Ewan, Haskell Karp, Shirley Karp, Blood, Circulation, Organ, Rejection, Donor, St. Luke's Episcopal Hospital, Texas Heart Institute, Baylor College of Medicine, Christiaan Barnard, Capetown, South Africa, Kidney

Transcript

First Artificial Heart Recipient Gets Human Heart Transplant

CHET HUNTLEY, anchor:

Haskell Karp, a salesman from Skokie, Illinois, was kept alive with a completely artificial heart for sixty-
three hours. And today in Houston, Doctor Denton Cooley and his team of surgeons gave him a real one--the heart of a forty-year-old widow, Mrs. Barbara Ewan of Lawrence, Massachusetts. She died shortly after being flown to Houston’s St. Luke’s Episcopal Hospital. Here is a report from Lee Tucker of KPRCTV in Houston.

LEE TUCKER, reporting:
The donor, Mrs. Barbara Ewan of Lawrence, Massachusetts, had suffered irreversible brain damage. She almost died several times during the trip to Houston. But Mrs. Ewan lived just long enough to make the transplant possible. This morning, the artificial heart which admitted life to Haskell Karp for almost three days was removed and the transplant operation carried out. Now, Doctor Denton Cooley, who developed the artificial heart and performed the transplant, says Karp’s condition is satisfactory. But he says the last three days have been trying ones.

DR. DENTON COOLEY: I’ve been concerned about the moment it began to work because it’d never been done before. We in the beginning were quite concerned about the effect this device had on the bloodstream. It appeared to be traumatic. And at first, there was considerable destruction of blood cells. But to our enormous satisfaction as time went on, the destruction became less and less so that this morning his blood was being destroyed at a very slow rate. But we-- we’re anxious to discontinue this device and move on to something with a little more known quantity because our effort has been entirely towards saving Mister Karp’s life.

TUCKER: Karp’s wife made a tearful plea last Saturday for a heart donor. Now with the transplant completed, Mrs. Karp expressed her relief and thanks.

SHIRLEY KARP: Someone heard my plea and they came through. I know what they’re going through now because I think we’ve died a thousand times over and over again with my husband. This has been ten years that we’ve been faced with death over and over again and I hope now this will give him a chance to know a little bit of happiness.

TUCKER: Doctor Cooley says the plastic heart has proven itself to be a good standby unit for transplant patients awaiting heart donors.

This is Lee Tucker reporting from Houston.

HUNTLEY: In Cape Town, South Africa, Doctor Christiaan Barnard, today, performed his fourth heart transplant. Neither the name of the donor nor the recipient was made public but the recipient is believed to be a Cape Town man. One of the donor's kidneys was transplanted in another patient by a different surgical team.