

AUBMC performs the first lung transplantation in Lebanon

The new procedure gives hope to terminal lung disease cases and raises awareness about the importance of organ donation

Beirut, January 15, 2019: In line with its commitment to providing cutting-edge medical treatment and technologies, the American University of Beirut Medical Center (AUBMC) performed the first lung transplant surgery in Lebanon. The procedure was performed on a patient with an end-stage cystic fibrosis lung disease and who has been homebound for the last two years on supplemental oxygen therapy. The complex procedure provided a new lease on life to the 42 year old female who had end stage lung disease and a life expectancy of less than one year. The transplantation procedure lasted around seven hours, during which the patient received two lungs' implantation. Her recovery was smooth, and she was successfully discharged home.

Dr. Jamil Borgi, Assistant Professor of Surgery in the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery, assisted by Dr. Pierre Sfeir, Head of the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery, performed the procedure. The success of the transplantation required the participation of a multidisciplinary team at the Medical Center that included specialists from anesthesia, pulmonary, immunology, pharmacy, and infectious diseases medicine.

The patient was evaluated by the lung transplantation team at AUBMC and listed on the National Organization for Organ Donation and Transplantation (NOODT) since October of 2018. The procedure was further supported by AUBMC and the Ministry of Public Health in a joined effort. The initiative aims to provide hope and improve survival and quality of life to terminal patients with end stage lung diseases. It drives further innovation in the field of transplantation and sheds light on the importance of organ donation.

Dr. Jamil Borgi said, "The surgical team at AUBMC is committed to providing cutting edge surgical therapies and procedures for every medical case, including the most difficult and complex among them." He added, "Performing the first lung transplantation in Lebanon marks a key milestone for AUBMC and expands regional access to this specialized level of care. This state-of-the-art procedure promotes organ donation that is vital for this type of cases," added Dr. Borgi.

Dr. Ziad Ghazzal, Deputy Executive Vice President/Dean and Interim Medical Center Director and Chief Medical Officer said, "Lung transplantation is a primary option in the care of patients

with end-stage chronic lung diseases, such as cystic fibrosis. Performing such a procedure gives a surge of hope and allows more people with end stage lung disease who have exhausted all other treatment options to be able to receive a lung transplant and resume a normal life.”

Dr. Pierre Sfeir said, “We are glad to see the reassuring results of this collaboration among the different parties involved, namely AUBMC, NOODT, and the Ministry of Public Health. The success of these recent cases further signals our expanded capabilities to address the most complex and challenging transplant cases for patients who had to seek treatment abroad. It further cements the position of AUBMC and the country as a leading destination for the most complex cases and surgical treatments.”

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About AUBMC

Since 1902, AUBMC has been providing the highest standards of care to patients across Lebanon and the region. It is also the teaching hospital for the Faculty of Medicine at AUB (established in 1867), which has trained generations of medical students and physicians, and whose graduates can be found at leading institutions around the world. AUBMC is the only medical institution in the Middle East to have earned the five international accreditations of JCI, Magnet, CAP, ACGME-I and JACIE attesting to its superior standards in patient-centered care, nursing, pathology/laboratory services and graduate medical education.

The Faculty of Medicine has graduated over 4,000 medical students and physicians; the Rafic Hariri School of Nursing provides excellent education for the nursing staff, and the Medical Center meets the healthcare needs of over 360,000 patient visits annually.

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