



## Historic Domino Heart Transplant in Babies

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Two teams of doctors at the Columbus Children's Hospital in Ohio and the two tiny babies they operated on made medical history with an extremely rare procedure, called domino heart transplant surgery.

Baby Jason Wolfe, 5 months old, needed a new set of lungs, as he had been born with a condition called primary pulmonary hypertension. Because of his condition, a heart-and-lungs transplant was recommendable, to avoid many sutures on the respiratory tract.

3-month-old Kyla Richardson, admitted to the same hospital, was born with a single ventricle and thus needed a heart transplant.

Both sets of parents weren't given much hope, first due to the gravity of their babies' conditions, and secondly because baby organ donors are so rare.

However, on January 14, the life-saving opportunity occurred, after the organs of a baby that could not be saved became available. During a 12-hour surgery, Jason received the heart and lungs transplant, making available at the same time a healthy and perfectly compatible heart for Kyla.

The procedure was historical because it was the first domino heart transplant performed on patients so young; thus, Jason became the youngest living heart donor and Kyla, the youngest recipient. Also, the very small number of domino transplants performed in the United States make this procedure memorable. They are difficult because they imply both perfect timing and tissue matching. However, when performed, these procedures help save two lives at a time.

It really is a quite rare event because everything has to fall into place **Dr. Tim Hoffman**  
The babies are both past the critical stage and have a good prognosis. However, the rarity of the procedure makes long-term prognoses hard to predict.