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First Cadaver Paediatric Liver Transplant Surgery at Apollo Hospital

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Salama, a four-and-half-year-old girl from Hyderabad, became the first girl in the country to receive a cadaver pediatric liver transplant.

A team of transplant surgeons led by Manish C Agarwal at Apollo Hospitals, performed a paediatric liver transplant surgery on Salama, who was suffering from a rare liver disease called Ornithine Transcarbamylase (OCT), due to which liver lacks enzymes required for processing proteins. Due to the problem the child could not eat foods like chocolates or milk.

“Till her second year she was fine but problem started two years ago, when she was two-and-half years. When we consulted doctors we were told that liver transplant is the only option for her problem,” Mohammed Mujeeb, father of Salama, said. They had to wait for more than two years as it was highly difficult to get a liver donor for a child.

“Doing a liver transplant for a kid is highly complicated as we need liver only from a child. If there is no suitable donor in the family then a child donor has to be found, if not a split liver transplant, where an adult liver from a brain dead person is divided into two small parts and one is transplanted in a child. Surgeons need to be highly cautious while

performing the surgery as body parts of kids will be about 25% of the size of elders' organs," said Manish, chief transplant surgeon.

In Salama's case as there were no suitable donors in the family she was put on cadaver organ waiting list under Jeevandan, Telangana's cadaver organ transplantation programme.

The long painful wait for Salama ended when liver transplantation was performed on her in July third week, following organ donation from a brain dead child.

"This is the first cadaver liver transplant for a child in India, and though it's an achievement for us, the real credit goes to the cadaver organ donor kid, because of which the organ transplantation was possible.

A multidisciplinary approach involving surgeons, doctors and support staff from various specializations is needed for performing a pediatric liver transplantation. The surgery which was very complex but has been so successful that Salama was moved out of the ICU in just three days and discharged after 12 post-operative care," Manish said.