

In the news – International

A Kidney Donor in the Past, Now a Recipient of Genetically Modified Pig Kidney

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Towana Looney, 53, is free from dialysis and in better health following a gene-edited pig kidney transplant last month by NYU Langone Health surgeons. The operation represents the most recent encouraging development in a newly developed surgical technique suggested as the fix for the organ shortage. Looney gave one of her kidneys to her mother in 1999. But she developed a disorder that finally resulted in chronic kidney disease when she became pregnant with her second child in 2002. Looney started dialysis late in 2016. She was highly sensitized; thus, she couldn't find a good match. One further choice was a genetically modified pig kidney.

Looney's fresh kidney came from United Therapeutics' subsidiary, Revivicor Inc - the company modified the DNA of the pig. The kidney was engineered with 10 genetic edits to optimize compatibility with the human body. On January 25, 2025 with her new kidney completing 61 days and still counting, Towana Looney became the first longest-living recipient of a xenotransplant.

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