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Xenograft-to-Allograft Transition in Kidney Transplantation: First Clinical Documentation

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A US patient has become the first person known to "cross the bridge" from a genetically modified pig kidney to a human kidney transplant. Tim Andrews, who lived with diabetes and end-stage kidney disease, received a pig kidney in January 2025 as part of an experimental xenotransplant program, and kept it functioning for a record 271 days before his body rejected the organ.

After the pig kidney was removed in October 2025, Andrews returned to dialysis and was placed back on the waiting list for a human donor organ. In mid-January 2026, he received a human kidney transplant at Mass General Brigham, reportedly almost a perfect match, and now describes himself as the first in the world to have lived with both a pig kidney and then a human kidney.

Clinicians say his case is significant because it suggests that experimental pig-organ transplants may, in selected patients, act as temporary "bridges" that keep people alive and out of dialysis until a human organ becomes available. However, experts also stress that xenotransplantation remains highly experimental, and human organ donation and transplantation continue to be the standard of care for kidney disease.

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