

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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ABIOCOR SURGERY PERFORMED, PATIENT DOES NOT SURVIVE

(Louisville, Ky.) – University of Louisville surgeons Laman Gray, M.D., and Rob Dowling, M.D., performed surgery Wednesday, April 10, 2002 at Jewish Hospital to implant the seventh AbioCor™ Implantable Replacement Heart, manufactured by ABIOMED, Inc., of Danvers, Mass. While the AbioCor functioned as expected, the patient died post operatively. The AbioCor multidisciplinary team is actively reviewing all details of the case.

Out of respect for the patient and family, interviews and additional details, including the name of the patient, will not be available.

The patient was in a severely debilitating preoperative condition. The patient had a history of heart problems, was on multiple medications to maintain a stable blood pressure, had an intra-aortic balloon pump and was on a ventilator prior to surgery, according to the physicians.

“The clinical trial was the only option left for this patient,” said Dr. Gray. “Like all of our AbiCor patients, the patient was a hero, and has our utmost respect. We are truly saddened by this death.”

“We extend our deepest sympathy to the patient’s family and friends,” said Dr. Dowling.

To be accepted into the AbioCor clinical trial, the FDA requires that patients have a high probability of dying within 30 days. The patients and their families receive extensive education about the technology and the risks involved in participating in the studies. In addition, they meet with an independent patient advocate throughout the process.

Wednesday’s surgery was the third procedure performed at Jewish Hospital, which also implanted the world’s first and second replacement heart. The world’s first recipient, Robert Tools, died 151 days after his surgery on July 2, 2001. Tom Christerson, the longest living recipient, received his heart September 13, 2001. He was discharged to The Inn at Jewish Hospital on March 20, 2002.

Jewish Hospital is among the top ten cardiac centers in the United States and, along with the University of Louisville, is dedicated to excellence, research and education.