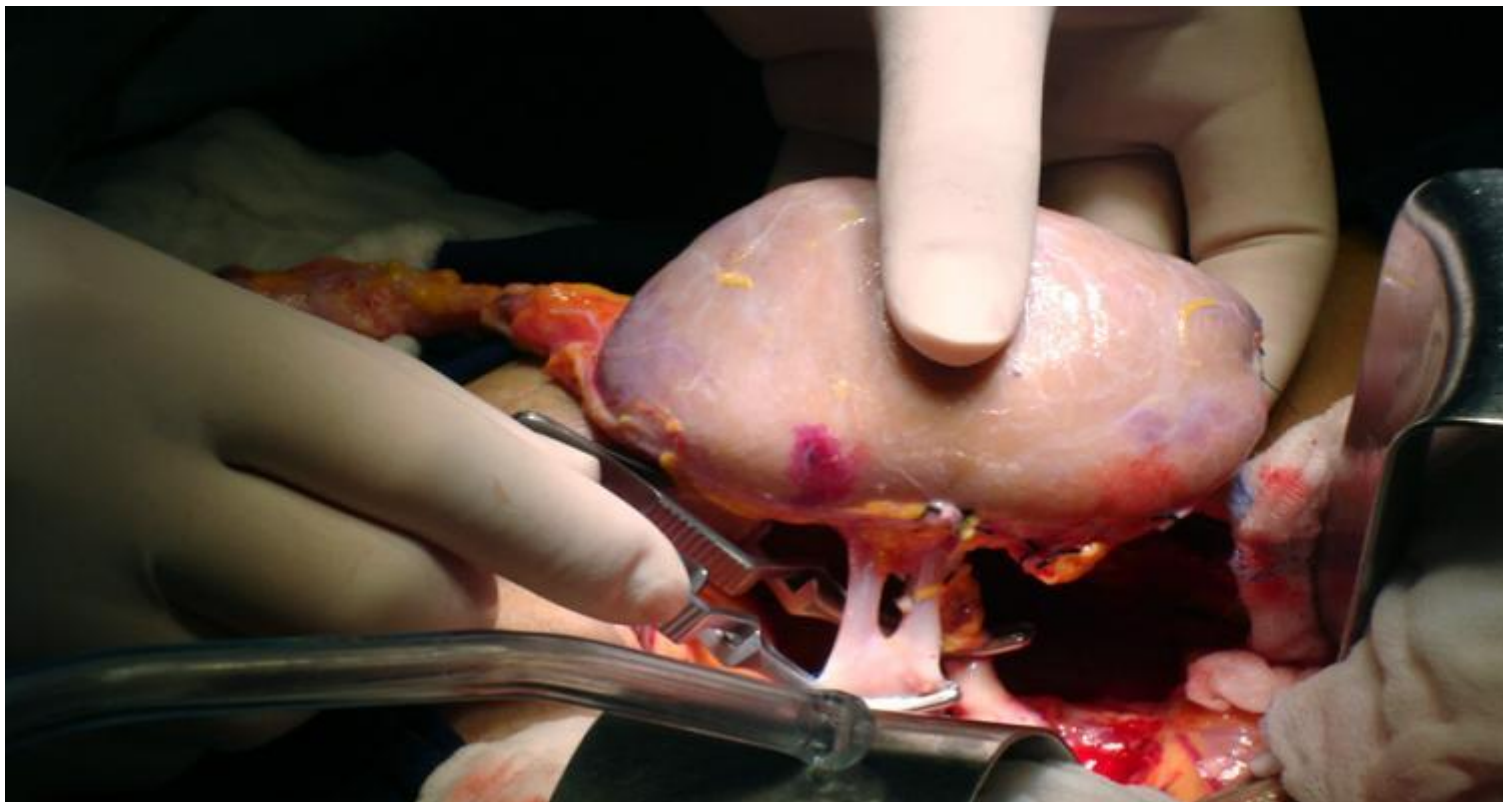


Half a century of kidney transplants in Cuba



Havana, February 24 (RHC)-- Cuba is exhibiting this Monday one of its greatest achievements in the field of public health, counting more than six thousand kidney transplants since February 24, 1970.

In the opinion of Cuban health authorities, this figure proves the spirit of solidarity of the people and the quality of the specialists involved in this type of practice.

Cuba has nine centers for this purpose, in addition to a network of nephrological services distributed regionally and in close connection with polyclinics and family doctor's offices.

Dr. Raúl Herrera, head of the National Nephrology Group, said at a press conference on the 50th anniversary of the first kidney transplant in Cuba that the basis of the care system lies in the family doctor's offices.

It is there where the doctors can prevent, control the risk factors, and investigate the affected patient early.

On February 24, 1970, a 23-year-old man became the first Cuban with a successful kidney transplant. Since then, many people have benefited from this procedure.

On the island's network of nephrological units, 3,500 patients are currently undergoing dialysis. From those patients, the transplant recipients are chosen, Herrera said.

Dr. Mario Antonio Enamorado, head of the National Transplant Office, said that in the last five years, some 900 people benefited from kidney replacement in Cuba.

He stressed that the success of the program is due to the altruism of the island's people, who, in the face of such a difficult moment as the loss of a loved one, show the willingness to donate these organs to save other people's lives.

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