

US surgery planned for conjoined twins from Philippines

31 October 2011

Conjoined two-year-old girls born in the Philippines are to undergo surgery on Tuesday to separate them at the chest and abdomen, said the California hospital where the operation will take place.

"I want them to live normally, like other children," said Ginady.

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The riskiest part of Angelina and Angelica Sabuco's surgery is expected to be the process of separating their livers, said Lucile Packard Children's Hospital in the northern city of Palo Alto.

"[Survival rates](#) for [twins](#) joined primarily at the chest, known as thoraco-omphalopagus twins, are dependent on the complexity of the heart connection, if any, and any complications related to the separation of the [liver](#)," the hospital said in a statement.

The girls, who turned two in August, are joined at the chest and belly. However they have separate brains, hearts, kidney, stomachs and [intestines](#).

The operation is expected to take eight to nine hours -- six hours to separate the girls and two to three hours of reconstruction, the hospital said.

It will be lead surgeon Gary Hartman's sixth operation on conjoined twins. The most recent set of twins separated at the hospital were Yurelia and Fiorella Rocha-Arias of Costa Rica in November 2007. They are doing well.

"This is a major operation, but we really expect both twins to survive and to do well," said Hartman.

The girls' mother, Ginady, said she learned her babies were conjoined when she was seven months pregnant and her husband was working in San Jose, California.

The babies were born in August 2009, and she joined her husband, Fidel, in California in late 2010 when they began meeting with doctors at Packard Children's Hospital.

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