

# Doctors pleased with twin boys' progress; one now off ventilator

DALLAS (AP) — Egyptian twin Mohamed Ibrahim sat upright for the first time Monday.

Eight days after their separation surgery, the newly separated toddlers continued to gradually improve.

Mohamed now breathes on his own and is the more active and alert twin, said Dr. James Thomas, chief of critical care services at Children's

Medical Center Dallas.

His brother, Ahmed, should be taken off his ventilator late Monday or Tuesday. Both boys have shown what doctors called "dramatic improvement" since their surgery. Though their progress may slow down, Thomas said the important thing is they keep getting better.

"Because the boys are twins, peo-

ple focus on their similarities and expect them to follow similar clinical courses," Thomas said. "However, the two boys are different in many ways, including their responses to complex neurological surgery. Therefore, each is recovering in his own way."

A marathon 34-hour surgery separated the 2-year-old toddlers from the

tops of their heads.

The hospital said the twins are showing more motion in their arms and legs, and improved response to verbal cues from the family and medical team.

Thomas said he is cautiously optimistic that doctors will not have to place Mohamed back on a ventilator. Both continue to run low-grade fevers,

but don't appear to have infections.

Despite reasons for optimism, Thomas said precautions must be taken. "These boys are still at a critical stage in their recoveries and therefore are kept in an environment that minimizes stimulation," Thomas said. "Their visitors are limited to the immediate family, their Egyptian nurses and the medical team only."

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