

Watch this face ... he's just made transplant history

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A HOSPITAL in Spain says it has carried out the world's first full-face transplant, giving a man a new nose, skin, jaws, cheekbones, teeth and other features after he lost his face in an accident.

Other transplant experts have praised the surgery but are not sure it can technically be called "full-face". The operation was carried out by a 30-member medical team last month and took 24 hours, the Vall d'Hebron Hospital in Barcelona said.

The patient had a new face from his hairline down and only one visible scar, which looked like a wrinkle running across his neck, said Joan Pere Barret, the surgeon who led the team.



World first ... Dr Joan Pere Barret checks out the results after he and his team performed a full-face transplant.

"If you look him in the face, you see a normal person, like anyone else we have as a patient in the hospital," Dr Barret said.

The surgeon said the patient, a Spaniard aged in his 30s who lost most of his face in an accident five years ago, was recovering well. He cannot yet speak, eat or smile but can see and swallow saliva, Dr Barret said.

The UK Facial Transplantation Research Team called the operation "the most complex face transplantation operation there has probably been in the world to date".