

Man makes first appearance after face transplant

Spanish farmer thanks donor's family



The world's first recipient of a full face transplant made his first appearance in Madrid today -- to say "thank you."

According to an [Associated Press](#) article, the 31-year-old Spanish farmer identified only as Oscar appeared at a news conference at Barcelona's Vall d'Hebron hospital, the same place where he was operated on in late March.

In the 24-hour surgery, Oscar was given a complete face -- including jaw, nose, cheekbones, muscles, teeth and eyelids -- which doctors attached like a mask. Before the operation, Oscar was unable to breathe or eat on his own because he accidentally

shot himself in the face five years earlier.

[FOX News](#) said that during the press conference, Oscar spoke publicly for the first time.

"I am very happy and I want to thank the surgeons and the donors, especially the man who gave me the new tissues I received," he said.

Doctors said the odds are good for Oscar's recovery. According to Dr. Joan Pere Barret, the head of the team of surgeons, Oscar will need between a year and 18 months of physical therapy -- but he is expected to regain up to 90 percent of his facial functions.

Right now, Oscar can eat soft foods and drink liquids, and the hospital said he has been able to speak for the past two months.

Dr. Barret said he hopes Oscar can regain his privacy after the rehabilitation is complete.

"I felt for him and am incredibly proud," he said. "It was a very brave thing to face everyone today because he is a very quiet man who wants to live a normal life."