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**Clinical Practice**

**TCI and NUH Perform Asia's First Kidney cum Bone Marrow Transplant**

The Cancer Institute (TCI) and the National University Hospital (NUH) have successfully performed a combined kidney and bone-marrow transplant for Mr Koh Hock Heng, who suffered from kidney failure and Myelodysplastic Syndrome (MDS, a pre-leukaemic disease). This is the first of its kind in the region. With MDS, Mr Koh would not have qualified for kidney transplantation. Yet, due to his kidney failure, his MDS condition could not be treated with the standard bone marrow transplantation as it would be too toxic.

The team decided to adopt a novel approach by first curing Mr Koh's MDS before performing a kidney transplantation. He underwent a non-myeloablative bone marrow transplantation which requires lower doses of chemotherapy and radiation. The patient's younger brother donated both his bone marrow and kidney for the procedure, and both operations were done eleven months apart, with the first beginning in June 2004.

The significance of such a treatment is that the patient and donor stem cells blend completely so there is no risk of organ rejection. Hence, the patient need not take immunosuppressant medications to stop the body from rejecting the donor's organ which can have serious side effects.