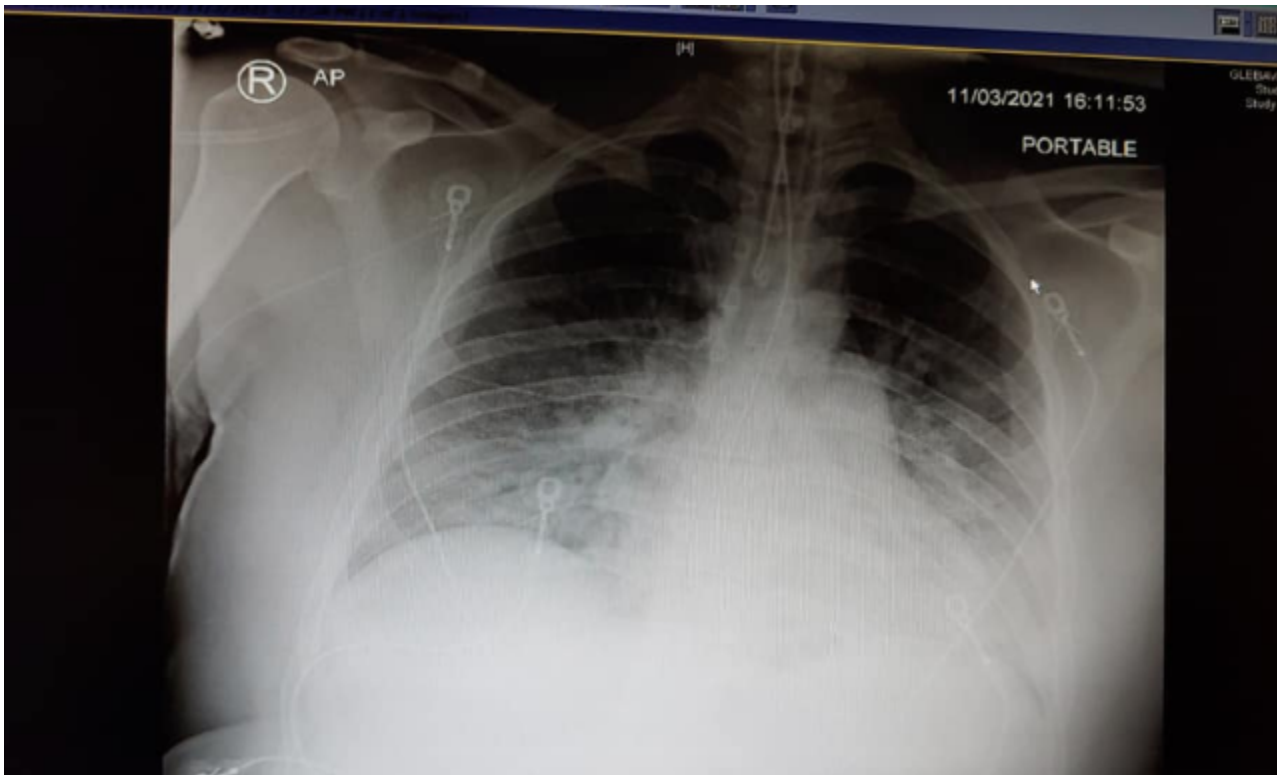




‘Miracle’ COVID Patient Eligible for Lung Transplant After Treatment

by Kanna Rook
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ST. LOUIS – Some are calling the present-day recovery of 27-year-old Bryan Glebavicius nothing short of a "miracle."

Glebavicius, of Maryville, IL., spent a record-breaking 78 days on ECMO, at SSM Health Saint Louis University Hospital.

ECMO stands for extracorporeal membrane oxygenation. The ECMO machine is similar to the heart-lung by-pass machine used in open-heart surgery. It pumps and oxygenates a patient's blood outside the body, allowing the heart and lungs to rest.

What started as a bad cough in October 2021 turned into life-threatening complications from COVID for Glebavicius, and led to a nearly three-month stay at SSM Health Saint Louis University Hospital. Bryan was transferred to Barnes-Jewish Hospital for a potential lung transplant on January 24, 2021.

Just a few days after being admitted to SLU Hospital, Bryan was put on ECMO.

“Exceptional care delivery, persistence, and mission-driven advocacy all came together to save this patient's life,” Steven M. Scott, hospital president, said. “Thank you to Nichole Russell, Drs. Prasad, Abo-Salem, Charbek, Kamel, our ECMO team, and the

entire 4N ICU team for their dedication to this patient's care. We would also like to recognize Lisa Erlinger in Case Management, whose diligence, tireless persistence, and focus on the patient led to her obtaining Medicaid for him which lead to his acceptance for lung transplantation."

"This is a huge win for our team," added Nichole Russell, cardiac program manager at SLU Hospital. "We could not have gotten him where he is today if it were not for these people."

This week has been especially uplifting for Bryan, his family, and the medical team.

"The transplant team has been starting to run tests and coming in and talking to us," said mother, Pat. "Respiratory came in and he was able to talk and talk. Something he hasn't done in months. A lot of jokes were told today and stories of him. It was a good day."



Many of Bryan's nurses have friended Pat on Facebook so they can stay updated on his progress.

"The nurses, PT, OT, RT, and ECMO nurses have been so wonderful at SLUH," Pat said on the day Bryan was transferred to Barnes. "A special thank you to Lisa and all the

hard work she did for us. And another thank you to all the doctors that took care of Bryan. We will miss you all."

"I pray with all my heart and soul that they can save him," she said. "If you are not vaccinated just look at what he is going through. Get your vaccine folks, I will preach this forever and always. I would rather see you all 6 feet apart and not 6 feet under."

Pat closed with the following statement: "If you're not vaccinated... you need to be vaccinated. "This isn't nothing to mess with."

[Dan Brannan also contributed to this story.](#)