

By ~~September 2007~~ Science Editor

[Chinese Woman Carried Inside Her Body 26 Sewing Needles for 31 Years!](#)

In the brain, liver, lungs and kidneys

She can consider herself lucky because had she been conceived in these times, her mother would have had an abortion. Chinese doctors have found 26 sewing needles inside the body of Luo Cuifen, a 31-year-old woman. They suspect they were inserted into the woman's body when she was a newborn by her grandparents because they were upset she was not a boy. Some of the needles entered the vital organs, such as the lungs, liver and kidneys and one even in the woman's brain was broken into three parts. The sinister discovery was made only when Luo went to hospital because of blood presence in her urine. A routine X-ray revealed the horrific truth. Till this age, the woman was in good health. A team made of 23 doctors, including five specialists from the United States and Canada, are making a plan for removing in the most efficient way the needles at the Richland International Hospital in Kunming, the capital of Yunnan province (southern China). "Removing the needles would be a long, complicated procedure requiring several operations." Xu Mei, the chief doctor at the hospital, told the BBC. The first surgery will occur next week and the woman will get rid of seven needles. This first procedure is evaluated at 170,000 yuan (\$22,500), but it will be made for free. Luo, from rural Songming County, will have to raise by herself funds for the other surgeries. The theory of the disappointed grandparents cannot be proven now, as they died. In many rural areas boys have always been more 'valuable' than girls, as they are the ones who carry on the family name. According to the Chinese tradition only a son can do the funerary rites for his parents and ancestors. Combined ignorance (read it cultural preferences for boys), modern reproductive technology and one child policy has led to the fact that by 2020 there will be over 37 million extra Chinese men. There are already 18 million more young Chinese men than women. In the past, undesired girls were commonly abandoned; while modern technique allows their abortion. As China grows richer, more Chinese couples afford paying an ultrasound pregnancy check for practicing gendercide. And annually, 2 million more men are born. About 70 million more boys than girls are born in China. In some provinces of southern China, there is a sex ratio at birth of 130 - 135 boys for every 100 girls (!) (these are absolute world records; the normal sex ratio is 103:100).