

Giffords breathing on her own, moving both arms

By Thomas H. Maugh II and Seema Mehta, Los Angeles Times

TUCSON – U.S. Rep. Gabrielle Giffords is breathing on her own and is moving both arms, both very encouraging signs of recovery, physicians at University Medical Center in Tucson said Tuesday.

In an interview, Dr. Peter Rhee, the chief of trauma at the medical center, said Giffords was moving both arms, although her left arm was more active than her right, and moving her eyes. Previously, doctors had said that she was moving only her left arm, which is controlled by the right hemisphere of her brain – the side that was not penetrated by the bullet.

The fact that she was able to move her right arm, which is controlled by the injured hemisphere, suggested that the damage was not as bad as surgeons had initially feared.

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