

Diego Maradona recovering well after undergoing gastric bypass in Venezuela

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Argentine football great Diego Maradona underwent a gastric bypass in the western Venezuelan city of Maracaibo over the weekend and is recovering well, doctors said on Sunday.

The 55-year-old former World Cup winner went through a similar operation around a decade ago and has battled ill health since his soccer heyday in the 1980s.

'He is walking and in good spirits,' said Carlos Felipe Chaux, one of the surgeons who treated him, told reporters at a Maracaibo hotel.

Maradona will remain in Venezuela for at least 12 more days to recover, he added.

Suffering shortages of medicines and surgical equipment, Venezuela may seem an odd choice for the operation.

However, Maradona has long been close to the country's socialist government.

Soon after the arrest of high-ranking FIFA officials earlier this year, Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro suggested Maradona would be a good fit for the next president of the embattled soccer organization.