

Castro, in First Details of Health Crisis, Says He Is Back on Solid Food

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HAVANA, May 23 (Reuters) — [Fidel Castro](#) said Wednesday that he was eating enough solid food to recover from several intestinal operations that had not been successful at first.

In his first detailed account of his health crisis since handing over power as [Cuba](#)'s leader 10 months ago, Mr. Castro said he had spent months being fed intravenously. "It wasn't just one operation, but various. Initially there was no success and this led to a prolonged recuperation," Mr. Castro said in an article distributed by the Cuban government by e-mail.

"For many months I depended on IVs and catheters through which I received an important part of my nourishment," he wrote. "Today I receive orally everything my recovery requires."

Mr. Castro, 80, has not appeared in public since emergency surgery forced him to relinquish power temporarily on July 31 to his brother Raul for the first time since his 1959 revolution.

He is thought to have suffered from diverticulitis or inflamed bulging of the large intestine.

Mr. Castro, who gave up smoking cigars 20 years ago, said his greatest dangers now were his age and the abuses he subjected his health to when he was younger.

The Cuban leader gave no indication of when he might show up again in public or resume leadership of Cuba's Communist government.

Video images of Mr. Castro released in October showed a gaunt and shuffling old man. Last month, however, images of him meeting with a Chinese Communist Party delegation showed him looking heavier, although still in a hospital. Cuban officials say he has regained 40 pounds he had lost after surgery.

Mr. Castro took to writing columns in March to reassert himself in Cuba. The columns, called “Reflections of the Comandante,” are published in the ruling Communist Party’s newspapers and read repeatedly on radio and television.

His articles have attacked the United States for threatening the world’s food supply with its biofuels plans, promoting free trade and encouraging defections from Cuba.

A column published Tuesday criticized Britain for building nuclear-powered attack submarines, saying the money could have been used to train 75,000 doctors, treat 150 million people or build 3,000 polyclinics in poor countries.