



Thanks to robotic surgery Kerra Tener (right) can enjoy swimming again with her sister, Korri, at Grand Lake in Oklahoma.

New Life for Area Student

Kerra Tener's senior year at Park Hill South became more than planning for college and the prom. For Kerra and her family, they received an education about a rare tumor and how a robot and a surgeon helped give Kerra back her life.

As a high school junior, Kerra experienced sudden excruciating stomach and back pain followed by blood in her urine. Diagnostic tests followed and it was determined a urinary tract infection most likely was to blame. Kerra recalls medication eliminated her symptoms and she enjoyed her junior year.

Her life took an unexpected turn the next year when she experienced the same symptoms. This time she was referred to Justin Albani, MD, a urologist, who conducted diagnostic tests. Kerra recalls waking up from one of those tests and hearing her mom explain that Kerra had a large tumor in her ureter (the tube that carries urine from the kidney to the bladder). "I was shocked because I never thought it would be a tumor," remembers Kerra, who was just 18 years old.

"A tumor in the ureter is very unusual, especially in a young, healthy woman like Kerra," explains Dr. Albani, with Urology Specialists. "Because of its rarity, sometimes this condition is misdiagnosed as a kidney stone or urinary tract infection."

Luckily for Kerra a newer surgical procedure, where a da Vinci® robot assists the surgeon, became a viable treatment option. This type of minimally invasive surgery incorporates instruments that offer the same precision and dexterity as the human hand and a three-dimensional and magnified view for the surgeon. Kerra's recovery involved only three keyhole-sized incisions and an overnight stay in the hospital instead of a larger incision and a more prolonged recovery.

Robotic surgery means less pain and blood loss, less scarring, reduced risk of infection and a faster return to daily activities. It's now used for a variety of urological procedures as well as gynecological procedures such as hysterectomies.

For Kerra, she's grateful that her tumor wasn't cancerous and thanks to the surgery, she is symptom-free and doing the things she loves like swimming, exercising and beginning her sophomore year at Pittsburg State University.

Learn more about robotic surgery through a free brochure. Call **816-691-3023** or e-mail kim.shopper@nkch.org. ■

More patients are enjoying the benefits of robotic surgery at North Kansas City Hospital. The Hospital ranked first in Kansas City for the most procedures performed last year.

New Look for Women's Imaging

A new area now greets women who need breast care or imaging services. The area is called Women's Imaging at North Kansas City Hospital's Northland Women's Center. Warm colors and modern furnishings help women feel comfortable with a nonclinical-like setting. A dedicated reception and waiting area also is part of the facility located on the first floor of Health Services Pavilion.

"We hope women feel at ease when they come for their healthcare services but still know they are receiving highly-skilled clinical care with the latest technology," says Joe Strano, Radiology manager.

Services available in the new breast care and women's imaging area:

- **Digital mammography**—screens for breast irregularities with enhanced technology; one room is handicap accessible
- **Breast MRI**—enhances the capability to identify breast cancer
- **Mammotome®**—performs breast biopsies
- **Ultrasound**—visualizes organs such as breast, ovaries and uterus using sound waves to diagnose disease
- **Bone Density Analysis**—determines bone density as a way to screen for osteoporosis
- **Nurse Navigators**—support and guidance by nurses for women who undergo screening for breast cancer or who received a breast cancer diagnosis

Other imaging services not mentioned such as CT scans will still be offered in the general radiology area in Health Services Pavilion. A special area is available for men who require mammograms and breast MRI procedures.