Six-year-old Kinser thriving after heart surgery

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Health Care Home Project for patients with chronic conditions

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Mayo Clinic Health System staff respond to Haiti disaster

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Comprehensive diabetes care can mean a lifetime of better health

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mayoclinichealthsystem.org
Albert Lea ophthalmologist co-authors, co-edits third edition of clinical manual

Leonid Skorin, Jr., D.O., ophthalmologist, is the co-author and co-editor of the third edition of Ocular Therapeutics Handbook: A Clinical Manual, recently released by medical publisher Lippincott Williams & Wilkins. This textbook covers all aspects of medical and surgical eye care. It is used in both medical and optometry schools in the United States and worldwide. The first edition was released in 1998, and the second edition was published in 2005.

Dr. Skorin joined Mayo Clinic Health System in 2000 as an ophthalmologist with an emphasis on cataract, glaucoma and eyelid surgery. He also sees and treats patients with macular degeneration.

To schedule an appointment with him, call Eye Services at 507-373-8214.

Albert Lea welcomes new speech and language pathologist

Jennifer Compton, a speech and language pathologist, recently joined the staff at Mayo Clinic Health System in Albert Lea. Compton specializes in the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of swallowing, speech, voice, cognitive-linguistic and language disorders. She works with patients of all ages, including infants under the age of one.

Conditions and symptoms for children include speech-sound disorders, oral-motor and feeding difficulties, and voice disorders. Conditions and symptoms for adults include expressive and receptive aphasia, traumatic brain injuries, apraxia of speech, accent modification, fluency disorders and dysarthria, where muscles used for speaking make it difficult to pronounce words.

To schedule an appointment with Compton, please speak with your regular health care provider.

Welcome new providers

Fadi Yahya, M.D.
Obstetrics and Gynecology

Dr. Yahya received his medical degree from the American University of Beirut in Lebanon and recently worked as a resident physician at Riverside Regional Medical Center in Newport News, Virginia.

To schedule an appointment with Dr. Yahya, call 507-379-2131.

Craig Humphries, M.D.
Emergency Department

Dr. Humphries received his medical degree from the University of Missouri School of Medicine in Columbia and currently provides emergency medicine services in the Emergency Department.

To schedule an appointment with Dr. Humphries, call 507-379-2041.

Raymond Rivas, M.D.
Family Medicine

Dr. Rivas received his medical degree from Universidad Evangelica de El Salvador in San Salvador and recently was a resident physician at St. Luke’s Hospital in Bethlehem, Penn.

To schedule an appointment with Dr. Rivas, call 507-379-2041.
Are prenatal vitamins really necessary during pregnancy?

Yes! Prenatal vitamins are an important part of pregnancy nutrition. Here’s why you need them, when to start taking them and more.

A healthy diet is the best way to get the vitamins and minerals you need — but even if you eat healthfully every day, you may fall short on key nutrients. If you’re pregnant or hoping to conceive, prenatal vitamins can help fill any gaps.

How are prenatal vitamins different from other vitamins?

Most prenatal vitamins contain more folic acid, calcium and iron than do standard adult multivitamins. It’s still important to eat nutritious foods, but prenatal vitamins can help ensure you’re getting enough of these essential nutrients during pregnancy.

Here’s why it matters:

- **Folic acid** helps prevent neural tube defects. These defects are serious abnormalities of the brain and spinal cord.
- **Calcium** promotes strong bones and teeth for both mother and baby. Calcium also helps your circulatory, muscular and nervous systems run normally.
- **Iron** supports the development of blood and muscle cells for both mother and baby. Iron helps prevent anemia, a condition in which blood lacks adequate healthy red blood cells.
- **Prenatal vitamins** may reduce the risk of low birth weight, some research suggests.

Do I need to be concerned about other nutrients?

Standard prenatal vitamins don’t include omega-3 fatty acids, which help promote a baby’s brain development. If you’re unable or choose not to eat fish or other foods high in omega-3 fatty acids, your health care provider may recommend omega-3 fatty acid supplements in addition to prenatal vitamins.

Vitamin D is important as well, especially during the third trimester when calcium demands increase. Most prenatal vitamins don’t contain optimal amounts of vitamin D, however. In addition to your prenatal vitamin, drink vitamin D-fortified low-fat milk or other calcium-rich foods containing vitamin D. If you don’t drink milk or eat calcium-rich foods, talk to your health care provider about calcium and vitamin D supplements.

Do prenatal vitamins require a prescription?

Prenatal vitamins are available over the counter in nearly any pharmacy. Some prenatal vitamins require a prescription, however. Your health care provider may recommend a specific brand of prenatal vitamins or leave the choice up to you.

When should I start taking prenatal vitamins?

It’s best to start taking prenatal vitamins three months before conception. The baby’s neural tube, which becomes the brain and spinal cord, develops during the first month of pregnancy — perhaps before you even know that you’re pregnant.

How long should I take prenatal vitamins?

It’s best to take prenatal vitamins throughout your entire pregnancy, preferably with water or juice, not milk or soda. Your health care provider may recommend taking prenatal vitamins while you’re breast-feeding, too.

Do prenatal vitamins have any side effects?

Some women feel queasy after taking prenatal vitamins, and iron in prenatal vitamins may contribute to constipation. However, most women feel just fine and have no side effects.

For specific questions regarding prenatal vitamins and pregnancy, speak with your health care provider.

Obstetrics and Gynecology appointment number: 507-379-2131

Family Medicine appointment number: 507-379-2041
Many of us complain when we’re sidelined for a week with a cold. The aches, pains and disruption to our schedules can be frustrating.

Now, imagine having a chronic condition and living with that frustration daily.

Cheryl Van Zuiden is living that scenario. Van Zuiden has diabetes and congestive heart failure, and experiences a range of problems related to the two. She sees four doctors (her primary care physician, a cardiologist, an endocrinologist and an ophthalmologist), a dietitian and a nurse coordinator to help her manage the conditions.

“Managing my appointments and medications can get complicated,” says Van Zuiden.

But it’s getting easier, thanks to Linda Marino, a nurse coordinator in Albert Lea’s Health Care Home Project and a new member of Van Zuiden’s health care team. The project is designed to improve patient care and lower health care costs by helping patients stay healthy. Patients in the program have multiple chronic conditions, and are referred to the program by their primary providers.

The effort is part of a national movement to redesign primary care. Minnesota is a leader in this movement, and was selected as one of eight states to participate in the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services’ Multi-Payer Advanced Primary Care Practice demonstration project.

“The Health Care Home Project brings providers, patients and their families together to focus on improving a patient’s care. What we do depends on what the patient needs. It’s a very patient-centered approach.”

Linda Marino
Nurse coordinator
Health Care Home Project
Albert Lea

Van Zuiden checks in with Marino by phone once each week, and makes additional calls if she has questions or develops worrisome symptoms. Marino offers advice and reminders about care plans. She often accompanies Van Zuiden to medical appointments, and has gone to her home to check on her. The goal is to answer questions and address small problems before they become big ones.

“If I have a problem, the first thing I do is call Linda,” says Van Zuiden. “She tells me whether it’s something I need to come in to the clinic for, or if I can deal with it at home.”

Before she began working with Marino, Van Zuiden made frequent trips to the emergency department or to one of her doctors. That was an expensive, time-consuming and challenging way to manage her health.

“I don’t drive, so I would have to find a friend who could give me a ride,” says Van Zuiden. “I was spending a lot of time in waiting rooms and in doctor’s offices.”

Now, if Van Zuiden has a question about a symptom, Marino can often answer it over the phone.

“No matter what the issue, Linda will figure it out,” says Van Zuiden. “She has connections with all of my doctors, so she can contact them if she needs to. Then she calls me back and tells me what to do.”

Sometimes, that means simply waiting for a symptom to resolve itself; other times, scheduling an appointment with one of Van Zuiden’s physicians; and occasionally, a trip to the emergency department.

Van Zuiden estimates that her clinic and emergency room visits have been cut in half since she began working with Marino.

“It saves me time, and frees up the doctors to see the people who really need them,” says Van Zuiden.

Most importantly, Van Zuiden has seen improvements in her health, including better control of her diabetes.

“That’s the goal of this program,” says Marino. “We want to improve people’s health by helping them better manage their conditions. For someone like Cheryl, who sees multiple providers, it can be hard for everyone on
The flu and you: What you need to know to stay healthy this flu season

Halloween isn’t the only spooky thing on the calendar in October. The month also marks the start of something much scarier — flu season.

Each year, approximately 36,000 people die from seasonal flu, which attacks the respiratory system, including your nose, throat and lungs. Symptoms tend to come on suddenly and include:

- High fever
- Sore throat
- Muscle aches
- Dry cough
- Runny nose
- Fatigue

Your best defense against the flu is getting an annual flu shot. Other tips for avoiding the flu include:

- Washing your hands frequently
- Getting enough sleep
- Eating a healthy diet
- Exercising regularly
- Avoiding crowds during flu season

If you get the flu, try to rest and drink plenty of fluids. You can also use over-the-counter pain relievers to ease any aches and pains. If you develop flu symptoms and have a chronic health condition, such as diabetes, emphysema or heart disease, call your doctor.

Mayo Clinic Health System will offer the seasonal flu vaccine later this fall. Please call the Flu Shot Information Line in Albert Lea, 507-379-2211 or visit mayoclinichealthsystem.org for the latest information.

Excerpted with permission from MayoClinic.com.

Managing her diabetes and congestive heart failure is easier now for Cheryl Van Zuiden.

her team to have a big-picture view of what’s going on with her care. I’m able to get that view and to help her providers see it, too.”

Van Zuiden has noticed the difference.

“I feel like since I’ve been working with Linda, we’re all on the same page about my health,” she says. “It’s a real comfort to know she’s looking out for me.”

What is a health care home?

Despite its name, a health care home has no walls or windows.

“A health care home isn’t a place; it’s an approach to primary care,” says Linda Marino, a nurse coordinator in Albert Lea’s Health Care Home Project. “Patients who are part of a medical home have access to all the services and support they need. They have a go-to person who coordinates their care. Sometimes, that’s a primary provider. In our project, it’s a nurse coordinator.”

Minnesota has 134 certified health care homes. Mayo Clinic Health System in Austin and Owatonna and Mayo Clinic Employee and Community Health in Rochester are also certified health care homes. For more information, visit the Minnesota Department of Health’s website (www.health.state.mn.us) and search “health care home.”
Though a twister destroyed Ron Woodside’s home and took away the irreplaceable — his wife of 18 years, Kathy — it couldn’t crush his spirit.

The day that the violent EF4 tornado dropped from the sky on Woodside’s rural Minnesota acreage — June 17, 2010 — would set a new state record for the number of tornadoes recorded in a single day, at 48. Woodside (77) recalls seeing an approaching cloud and hearing the rain begin. Soon, the walls of his home were quivering. Suddenly, his home blew apart and he and Kathy were at the mercy of the twister, with wind speeds of 175 miles per hour.

“I remember bouncing along, like a giant was hammering me into the ground,” says Woodside.

Paramedics brought Woodside to the Emergency Department at Mayo Clinic Health System in Albert Lea, where doctors found he had 27 broken bones, including all 11 ribs on his left side, most of them in more than one place. A punctured lung, dislocated elbow and torn ligaments completed the picture: Woodside was in rough shape.

The emergency team focused on stabilizing Woodside’s breathing, managing pain and replenishing lost blood, but they knew he needed to get to Mayo Clinic. The fastest route — flying on a Mayo One helicopter — was unavailable because of continued unstable weather. The Albert Lea team prepped Woodside for the 60-mile drive via Gold Cross ambulance, but during the drive his condition continued to deteriorate.

At Mayo Clinic, trauma surgeons focused on his chest wall injuries first. A surgical team led by Brian Kim, M.D., trauma, critical care and general surgery, stabilized many of Woodside’s broken ribs with titanium plates and screws. The specialized surgery has been offered at Mayo Clinic for about two years.

“Without rib stabilization surgery, it’s difficult for ribs with multiple breaks to fuse back together in proper alignment,” says Dr. Kim. “The result would likely be a collapsed chest, chronic pain and lifelong breathing difficulties.”

After the surgery, Mayo Clinic’s team approach addressed all of his other injuries. Michael Torchia, M.D., the orthopedic surgeon who repaired Woodside’s torn ankle ligaments, says, “We had the specialists to cover all the bases for his care.”

Five weeks after the tornado, Woodside was discharged to a care center in Albert Lea to continue recovery. And slowly, he has begun to piece his life back together. He’s living in a new home on his farmstead, and enjoys attending his grandson’s high school football and basketball games.

“My story is unusual,” says Woodside. “Normally a person wouldn’t live after being out in a tornado.” He says it might not be so had he lived farther away from Mayo Clinic. He sums it up by saying, simply, “I’m grateful.”

A version of this story was published in Mayo Clinic’s 2010 Annual Report and is used here with permission.
‘Create Your Mayo Clinic Health Experience’ now open at Mall of America

If you’ve visited Mall of America lately, you may have noticed a familiar name among the usual shops: Mayo Clinic.

As part of its plans to open a permanent space in the Mall of America’s Phase II expansion project, Mayo Clinic opened ‘Create Your Mayo Clinic Health Experience’ on the first level near the East Market Rotunda in July. The temporary space is designed to gather input about what the public would like Mayo Clinic to offer in conjunction with its permanent presence at the mall.

“We know that health care in the future will not be limited to hospitals and doctor’s offices,” says David Hayes, M.D., a cardiologist at Mayo Clinic who is leading the Mall of America project. “Mall of America provides an opportunity for Mayo Clinic to help transform health care delivery by enhancing convenience and enabling more people to access Mayo Clinic health resources on a day-to-day basis.”

At ‘Create Your Mayo Clinic Health Experience,’ you can:
- Interact with touch-screen health applications
- Engage with Mayo staff to assemble tools to improve your health and well-being
- Participate in health education classes
- Receive literature from Mayo Clinic health professionals on women’s health, sports and performance health, preventive health, and family and lifestyle health
- Learn more about the services Mayo Clinic provides at its Arizona, Florida, Minnesota and Mayo Clinic Health System locations

Mayo Clinic coming to an e-reader near you

Where do you go for general health and wellness advice?

If you’re like millions of others across the world, you log on to MayoClinic.com for trusted health information from Mayo Clinic experts. If you want a reference piece for your library, you go to the bookstore to buy some of the most popular Mayo Clinic books.

But now, there’s a new option for your home library. You can now purchase a select number of Mayo Clinic books electronically. In most cases, the books are downloaded to your e-reader, tablet computer or smartphone in about a minute.

The first Mayo Clinic e-book, Mayo Clinic Guide to a Healthy Pregnancy, was released in May. The #1 New York Times best seller, The Mayo Clinic Diet, and The Mayo Clinic Diabetes Diet were published in e-book form this fall. Mayo Clinic is collaborating with RosettaBooks, a pioneer in digital publishing, to release the books.

“Mayo Clinic has long been a valued resource for America’s families,” says Sidna Tulledge-Scheitel, M.D., medical director, Mayo Clinic Global Products and Services. “We are excited to make our rich repository of books available to consumers in e-book form.”

By the end of this year, RosettaBooks will also make available several books in Mayo Clinic’s line of self-published titles, which were previously sold only through Mayo Clinic. Mayo Clinic e-books are available for purchase at all major e-book retailers.
When identical twins Caleb and Carson Ragaller were born in 2005, there was one easy way to tell them apart: Caleb was born with a cyst on the bridge of his nose.

“Our doctor said it was a nasal dermoid cyst and nothing to worry about,” says Tina Ragaller, the twins’ mother. “We planned to have it removed when he got older for cosmetic reasons.”

But as Caleb grew, so did his cyst. “It started growing down the length of his nose and became more prominent,” says Tina. When Caleb was 3 years old, Tina and her husband, Doug, decided to look into surgery.

At first, a CT scan at their local hospital in Ames, Iowa, appeared normal to their radiologist. “He said it was just a cyst, and typically a plastic surgeon just removes it with no problem,” Tina recalls. “But once we got to the plastic surgeon, he consulted with the radiologist again and thought there was more involved than what was on the surface.

“The plastic surgeon said he’d never had to turn down a cyst removal in 33 years of practice,” says Tina. But in Caleb’s case, he felt more comfortable referring the family to Mayo Clinic.

Team surgery
Caleb’s first appointment at Mayo Clinic was with child and adolescent neurologist Marc Patterson, M.D., to be sure the cyst wasn’t affecting his brain and body functions. Then he had an MRI scan, and that afternoon they met with neurologic surgeon Nicholas Wetjen, M.D.

“Dr. Wetjen said some skin may have gotten in the way when the bone was closing in utero, and now it was continuing to grow into his skull,” says Tina. “He recommended surgery soon, because if we waited, it could result in meningitis.”

Because the surgery would take place both inside Caleb’s skull and on his nose, Dr. Wetjen called on his colleague, Dana Mara Thompson, M.D., a pediatric otolaryngology (ENT) surgeon. Dr. Thompson would remove the part of the cyst growing on his nose, and Dr. Wetjen would remove the portion inside his head.
"They had done many surgeries together, so the way they worked together was phenomenal," says Tina. "They were very genuine, telling us what it was, what we had to do and what was in the best interest of our child. At that point, it was just a waiting game."

Caleb’s surgery was scheduled for about three weeks later.

"The surgery lasted nine and a half hours, and three of those were just to close him up again," recalls Tina. “It was one of the longest days of our lives, but they kept us informed."

When Tina and Doug saw their son again, they couldn’t believe it. “When you’re dealing with the nose, it takes the right stitching to minimize the scar,” says Tina. “It looked phenomenal.”

**Peace of mind and a fading scar**

During the surgery, Drs. Wetjen and Thompson were able to remove the entire cyst, both inside his skull and on his nose. A follow-up MRI at Mayo three months later confirmed that the surgery had been a success.

"They told us that the cyst was gone, and we didn’t need to come back again unless we noticed something," says Tina.

The Ragallers say that from start to finish, their experience at Mayo was “phenomenal.”

Tina says the little extras made the whole family feel cared for. “All the providers treated Caleb with respect, but they also took consideration of his twin,” she says. “When Caleb got a little toy during his MRI, they gave one to Carson, too. When they were doing photos before and after surgery and Caleb got a little treat, Carson got one, too. I thought that was outstanding.

"Not only were the physicians excellent, but everyone from the nurses to the secretaries to the person cleaning the floor were so respectful to all of us.”

Tina Ragaller

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Tina and Doug Ragaller were impressed by the Mayo Clinic team who treated their son, Caleb. “We felt comfortable and confident in their experience. They were respectful of the entire family, and they always kept us informed,” says Tina.
Working toward a healthier you

You’ve been hearing a lot lately about the benefits of being part of the Mayo Clinic family. For example: having access to Mayo Clinic specialists, often without having to leave your own community.

Now more than ever, Mayo Clinic is working toward finding new ways to prevent and better manage common conditions like obesity, diabetes and heart disease. As community health care providers we all share a commitment to improving the health of our friends and neighbors by evaluating new ideas for improving primary care.

Imagine the difference an improved primary care system could make to a patient with heart disease.

Take a 60-year-old man experiencing chest pains. He calls 911 and within minutes is transported to the hospital by a team of paramedics. Testing reveals a heart attack in process and they arrive at the doors of the emergency department where a team from the cardiac catheterization lab whisks the patient away for further testing. An angiogram reveals two narrowed arteries, which the team opens with angioplasty and stents. The patient spends five days in the hospital and several weeks recovering. He also participates in a cardiac rehabilitation program. He receives excellent, evidence-based care, and is grateful to be alive.

Now envision what might have happened if the man had received the best in community-based primary care. Decades earlier, when his cholesterol and blood pressure began creeping up, his primary care provider talked with him about options for lowering it. The man chose to make some dietary changes and begin an exercise program. These lifestyle changes kept his cholesterol and blood pressure in check for many years. But eventually they crept up again, and his primary care provider prescribed medication to help lower them. The man takes the medications faithfully, and continues to eat well and exercise. And he never has a heart attack.

That may make prevention sound straightforward, but it’s not. It requires a willingness to give up unhealthy habits and adopt healthy ones. It requires a commitment from both patients and providers to work together, taking care of small problems before they become big ones. The challenge may be a great one, but I believe it’s one we can meet. Your Mayo Clinic Health System provider is committed to providing you the best care possible for life. Let us work with you to improve your health and well-being.

“As community health care providers we all share a commitment to improving the health of our friends and neighbors by evaluating new ideas for improving primary care.”

Robert E. Nesse, M.D., CEO
Mayo Clinic Health System
Keith Olson, D.O., was one of 80 Mayo Clinic and Mayo Clinic Health System staff members who traveled to Haiti as part of a volunteer mission to help recovery efforts following the country’s devastating earthquake. Photos (clockwise from top left): Dr. Olson, center, with Mayo Clinic nurses Maren Johnson and Lindsay Young; typical earthquake rubble in Port au Prince; a tent city for displaced Haitians; a cholera ward; members of the second team of Mayo Clinic and Mayo Clinic Health System staff who traveled to Haiti; and Dr. Olson outside of a field hospital.

The earthquake that shook Haiti in January 2010 inspired many people to open their checkbooks and donate to relief efforts. But for some Mayo Clinic Health System staff members, writing a check wasn’t enough.

“There was just something in my heart drawing me there,” says Keith Olson, D.O., an emergency medicine physician in Owatonna, Minn. “I had always wanted to do something to give back. This seemed like a good way to ‘pay it forward.’”

Dr. Olson was one of 80 Mayo Clinic employees — nine of them from Mayo Clinic Health System — who recently traveled to Haiti as part of a medical mission sponsored by Mayo Clinic. More than 300 employees applied for the volunteer positions. Those selected donated their time, using paid time off or leave without pay. Mayo covered travel expenses, food and lodging; sent supplies and equipment; and donated $500,000 to Haiti relief agencies.

Volunteers were divided into eight teams that traveled to Port au Prince between February and June. The teams provided emergency care at St. Damien’s Hospital, and also worked at a rehydration center for Haitians sickened by a cholera epidemic that followed the earthquake.

In Haiti, the teams found they’d traveled not only across the miles but also back in time, caring for patients without many of the medications and diagnostic tools that are standard in the United States today. They also confronted a difficult reality.

“You learn early on that you can’t fix everything or save everyone,” says Mary Fargen, a physician assistant in Adams, Minn., who was on her 13th mission to Haiti. “So you do what you can and try to build something that will last after you leave.” Fargen received the 2011 Humanitarian of the Year Award from the American Academy of Physician Assistants for her work in the country.

In addition to direct patient care, the groups provided education to the Haitian health care workers. In return, they were given the gifts of perspective and gratitude.

“We are so fortunate in the United States,” says Wayne Street, director of nursing trauma in Eau Claire, Wis., who has completed 14 mission trips to Haiti, Africa and Mexico. “We have great medical care, and we have food and clean water. When you see people dying in huts from lack of food and water, it changes you. Volunteering changes you, too. I always come back renewed, energized and deeply rewarded, and with a new appreciation for all that we have.”

Mayo Clinic Health System is committed to helping people during times of need, both in the community and beyond its borders, providing financial support and volunteer hours to many organizations.
Six-year-old Kinser Hanson enjoys playing T-ball, swimming, and camping. He likes playing outside and driving around his backyard in an old golf cart with his sister. He also likes his scars. “I like my scars because they helped me stay alive,” he says.

Kinser is referring to the little red incision marks left by the heart surgery he had when he was 5 days old to repair a defect known as transposition of the great arteries.

Transposition of the great arteries is a rare heart defect present at birth in which the two main arteries leaving the heart, the pulmonary artery and the aorta, are reversed. The condition changes the way blood circulates through the body, leaving a shortage of oxygen in blood flowing from the heart to the rest of the body. Without an adequate supply of oxygen-rich blood, the body can’t function properly. In a child, this type of defect can be fatal.

Kinser was born on Jan. 26, 2005, after what his parents, Scott and Carrie, call a perfect pregnancy. “I had absolutely no trouble while I was pregnant with him; everything went beautifully,” Carrie says. The Hansons, who live in Lake Mills, Iowa, also have a daughter, MaKenna, now 8.

Four hours after Kinser was born, nurses noticed something was wrong. “The nurses took him for his first bath and they noticed his fingers, toes and lips had turned purple,” Carrie says. “We just thought maybe his oxygen levels were low.”

Blue skin color is a symptom of transposition of the great arteries.

Heidi Stoltenberg, M.D., a pediatrician at Mayo Clinic Health System in Albert Lea, ordered a number of tests for Kinser, including an X-ray which showed he had an enlarged heart. A Mayo Clinic Neonatal Intensive Care Unit was called in to take him to Saint Marys Hospital via ambulance. Scott drove to Rochester separately and Carrie joined him after she was discharged from the hospital the next day.

In Rochester, providers told the Hansons that Kinser would need heart surgery known as the arterial switch operation, in which the pulmonary artery and the aorta are moved to their normal positions. In that procedure, the pulmonary artery is connected to the right ventricle and the aorta is connected to the left ventricle. The coronary arteries are also reattached to the aorta.

During the surgery, performed on Jan. 31, surgeons also repaired an atrial septal...
defect, a congenital heart defect in which the wall that separates the upper heart chambers does not close completely. On Feb. 12, Kinser was released from the hospital.

Both Carrie and Scott agree that adrenaline got them through those first few weeks.

Kinser’s half-day surgery was successful. Kinser had follow-up appointments every six months for his first year and then annual appointments. Kinser sees Anita Eshelman-Peters, M.D., at Mayo Clinic Health System in Lake Mills, who coordinates his care with David Driscoll, M.D., a pediatric cardiologist at Mayo Clinic in Rochester.

“After the surgery, the doctors were worried about his oxygen levels,” Scott says, “but everything turned out the way they wanted it to.”

The Hansons say doctors have advised them that Kinser might need another surgery to replace his aortic valve later in life. But other than being on a small dose of medication to help monitor a leaky aortic valve, taking antibiotics before procedures such as dental work and having tubes put in his ears to prevent infection, Kinser has the OK to act like a normal 6-year-old boy.

“The doctors have advised us to try to get him interested in golf, instead of other higher-intensity sports, but he doesn’t have any restrictions,” Carrie says.

Only recently, Kinser started asking about his scars.

“In previous summers, when we’d go swimming, he’d want to wear his swim shirt, and this summer told us he didn’t want to wear the shirt any more,” says Carrie. “I think now that he’s a little older he can understand what happened. He understands what he sees when we go through his baby book, things like that.”

The Hansons say they will probably always wonder how his congenital medical condition happened, but they are grateful every day for Kinser’s good health.

“We are so appreciative for the staff we’ve worked with in Albert Lea, Rochester and Lake Mills, how well they all work together and how well Kinser has been treated,” Carrie says.

Medical information for this story excerpted with permission from MayoClinic.com.
Classes, programs, events and support groups

Albert Lea

For information about classes, programs and support groups in Albert Lea, call the numbers listed or contact the Patient Education Center, first floor, 507-379-2046.

Prenatal/parenting classes

Baby Place Tours
No fee.
Call 507-377-6366 to schedule.

Childbirth Education
No fee.
Call 507-377-6366 to register and for more information.

Support groups

Cancer
Last Monday of month, 6 p.m.
Lower level, Mayo Clinic Health System in Albert Lea
Contact Bonnie, 507-379-2050.

Ostomy Support Group
Second Thursday of the month,
Contact Stacy Palmer,
507-377-6790.

It’s Quittin’ Time
FREE one-on-one assistance with a certified tobacco treatment specialist to help you stop smoking for good.
Call 507-377-6393 to make an appointment.

Sports Conditioning
Individually designed programs for young athletes and adults.
By appointment.
Health Reach ✨
Fee varies.
Call 507-377-5900.

Other classes/programs

Infant Care
For parents of infants ages newborn to 3 months.
First and third Wednesday of each month, noon to 1 p.m.
No fee.
Call 507-379-2110 to register.

OB/GYM
Medically approved and supervised conditioning program for prenatal and postpartum women.
Health Reach ✨
Call 507-377-5900 to schedule.

Prenatal Breast-feeding
Single session taught by a public health nurse.
Oct. 4: 7 to 9:30 p.m.
Nov. 17: 9:30 a.m. to noon
Public Health, Freeborn County Government Center, 411 S. Broadway, Albert Lea
No fee.
Call 507-377-5100 to register and for more information.

Cancer Support Group
Last Monday of month, 6 p.m.
Lower level, Mayo Clinic Health System in Albert Lea
Contact Bonnie, 507-379-2050.

Ob/Gym
Health Reach ✨
Contact Jill Rockers at
507-377-5900.

It’s Quittin’ Time
FREE one-on-one assistance with a certified tobacco treatment specialist to help you stop smoking for good.
Call 507-377-6393 to make an appointment.

Sports Conditioning
Individually designed programs for young athletes and adults.
By appointment.
Health Reach ✨
Fee varies.
Call 507-377-5900.

Autism Support Group
First Thursday of month; 6 to 7 p.m.
Lower level, Mayo Clinic Health System in Albert Lea
Contact Jayne, 507-377-3029.

Freeborn County Parkinson’s Support Group
Fourth Tuesday of each month; 9:30 a.m.
Senior Center, 1701 W. Main St., Albert Lea
Contact Maureen, 507-373-1808,
or Anne, 507-874-3367.

Grief
New session held several times yearly.
Call 507-377-6393.

Chemical Dependency Relapse Support Group
Sundays; 6:30 p.m.
Fountain Centers Lecture Hall
Call 507-377-6411 for more information.

Lupus Support Group
Contact Maxine, 507-826-3469
or Judy, 507-373-4735.

Senior Resources Family Caregivers’ Network
Third Thursday of every month,
Thorne Crest Apartments
Board Room, 1201 Garfield Ave., Albert Lea
Caregivers’ family members and friends are welcome.
Call 507-377-7433 for more information.

Type 1 Diabetes Support Group
Contact Taryn Israel, tkisrael@yahoo.

Community programs and support groups

Albert Lea AIDS Services
Family Support Group
Second Tuesday of month.
Contact John, 507-373-0905.

Alzheimer’s Support Group
Second Monday of month; 6:30 p.m.
Oak Park Place, 1615 Bridge St., Albert Lea
Contact Cindy, 507-373-5600.

Infant Care
For parents of infants ages newborn to 3 months.
First and third Wednesday of each month, noon to 1 p.m.
No fee.
Call 507-379-2110 to register.

OB/GYM
Medically approved and supervised conditioning program for prenatal and postpartum women.
Health Reach ✨
Call 507-377-5900 to schedule.

Prenatal Breast-feeding
Single session taught by a public health nurse.
Oct. 4: 7 to 9:30 p.m.
Nov. 17: 9:30 a.m. to noon
Public Health, Freeborn County Government Center, 411 S. Broadway, Albert Lea
No fee.
Call 507-377-5100 to register and for more information.

Cancer Support Group
Last Monday of month, 6 p.m.
Lower level, Mayo Clinic Health System in Albert Lea
Contact Bonnie, 507-379-2050.

Ob/Gym
Health Reach ✨
Contact Jill Rockers at
507-377-5900.

It’s Quittin’ Time
FREE one-on-one assistance with a certified tobacco treatment specialist to help you stop smoking for good.
Call 507-377-6393 to make an appointment.

Sports Conditioning
Individually designed programs for young athletes and adults.
By appointment.
Health Reach ✨
Fee varies.
Call 507-377-5900.

Autism Support Group
First Thursday of month; 6 to 7 p.m.
Lower level, Mayo Clinic Health System in Albert Lea
Contact Jayne, 507-377-3029.

Freeborn County Parkinson’s Support Group
Fourth Tuesday of each month; 9:30 a.m.
Senior Center, 1701 W. Main St., Albert Lea
Contact Maureen, 507-373-1808,
or Anne, 507-874-3367.

Grief
New session held several times yearly.
Call 507-377-6393.

Chemical Dependency Relapse Support Group
Sundays; 6:30 p.m.
Fountain Centers Lecture Hall
Call 507-377-6411 for more information.

Lupus Support Group
Contact Maxine, 507-826-3469
or Judy, 507-373-4735.

Senior Resources Family Caregivers’ Network
Third Thursday of every month,
Thorne Crest Apartments
Board Room, 1201 Garfield Ave., Albert Lea
Caregivers’ family members and friends are welcome.
Call 507-377-7433 for more information.

Type 1 Diabetes Support Group
Contact Taryn Israel, tkisrael@yahoo.

Support groups

Cancer
Last Monday of month, 6 p.m.
Lower level, Mayo Clinic Health System in Albert Lea
Contact Bonnie, 507-379-2050.

Ostomy Support Group
Second Thursday of the month,
Contact Stacy Palmer,
507-377-6790.

It’s Quittin’ Time
FREE one-on-one assistance with a certified tobacco treatment specialist to help you stop smoking for good.
Call 507-377-6393 to make an appointment.

Sports Conditioning
Individually designed programs for young athletes and adults.
By appointment.
Health Reach ✨
Fee varies.
Call 507-377-5900.

Other classes/programs

Cancer Support Group
First Thursday of month; 6 to 7 p.m.
Lower level, Mayo Clinic Health System in Albert Lea
Contact Jayne, 507-377-3029.

Freeborn County Parkinson’s Support Group
Fourth Tuesday of each month; 9:30 a.m.
Senior Center, 1701 W. Main St., Albert Lea
Contact Maureen, 507-373-1808,
or Anne, 507-874-3367.

Grief
New session held several times yearly.
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Chemical Dependency Relapse Support Group
Sundays; 6:30 p.m.
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Senior Resources Family Caregivers’ Network
Third Thursday of every month,
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Call 507-377-7433 for more information.

Type 1 Diabetes Support Group
Contact Taryn Israel, tkisrael@yahoo.
Consider it one-stop shopping for diabetes patients: a registered dietitian and certified diabetes educator rolled into one health care provider. That’s one way to think of her, Denise Arnold agrees.

A registered dietitian for eight years at Mayo Clinic Health System in Albert Lea, Arnold received her diabetes educator certification in May and now sees patients in Austin as well.

“The amount of people with diabetes is increasing and there was a need to fill,” says Arnold when asked why she decided to become a diabetes educator. “I’m able to see diabetes patients for both diabetes education and nutritional therapy. It helps meet the needs of the whole patient.”

Arnold works closely with the diabetes education team at both locations to provide services in both the clinic and hospital settings.

“Our mission is to help individuals receive the knowledge, skills, attitude and behaviors needed for both self-management of diabetes and improved quality of life,” she says.

Diabetes management

Effective diabetes management can help avoid many problems associated with the disease. Arnold answers questions about the role diet plays in diabetes management and discusses Mayo Clinic Health System’s approach to helping patients manage the disease.

Q: I have diabetes. Do I need to stop eating carbohydrates?

A: Absolutely not. Carbohydrates are fuel for your body just as gas fuels your car. You need enough carbs in your “tank” for your body to function, but too many can overload your tank and cause high blood sugar.

It’s important to remember that some carbs are better for our bodies than others. For example, the carbs contained in fruit, milk and whole grains are more beneficial than those in candy, sweets and fast foods. Choosing healthy carbs is important for anyone — with or without diabetes. So is limiting fat and cholesterol and controlling the number of calories you consume.

Q: I was just diagnosed with diabetes. Who should I see for care?

A: First, you should see your primary care provider, a dietitian and a certified diabetes educator to learn about the disease and how to manage it. Then, you’ll become part of your own “diabetes team.” The team will center on you and include your primary provider, a certified diabetes educator who specializes in diabetes management, a dietitian and other appropriate providers.

Mayo Clinic Health System’s optimal diabetes measure goal

If you have diabetes, your provider will work with you to achieve the following:

- An A1C of less than 8
- An LDL (“bad”) cholesterol of less than 100
- Blood pressure under 130/80 mm Hg

In addition, you’ll be asked to take an aspirin each day and, if you’re a smoker, to quit.

These five measures make up Mayo Clinic Health System’s optimal diabetes measure goal.
Comprehensive diabetes care  continued from page 15

Q: Are there classes I can take to learn more about diabetes?
A: Mayo Clinic Health System classes are offered throughout the year. They provide information on diet, exercise, blood sugar monitoring, the physiology of diabetes, potential complications of the disease, and different medications involved. Classes also cover topics of interest to those living with diabetes, including tips for travel, exercise and holiday eating. There is a diabetes support group, and annual classes for those who have completed the other classes but want an annual update in a group setting. For more information, call the Patient Education Center at 507-379-2046.

Q: I’ve had good control of my diabetes for 10 years, but lately I’m having trouble managing my blood sugar. Any suggestions for getting it back on track?
A: It’s easy to get stuck in a rut and hard to get back out. Asking for help can be difficult, but it’s the right thing to do when you’re struggling to manage your diabetes. I suggest you meet with your primary care provider to determine what’s at the root of your problem. Once you understand your challenges, your diabetes team can help you develop strategies to get back on track.

Diabetes 101

Many people do not recognize early symptoms of diabetes, which can be subtle and may include:

- Excessive thirst and increased urination
- Fatigue
- Unintentional weight loss
- Blurred vision
- Slow-healing sores or frequent infections
- Tingling hands and feet
- Red, swollen, and tender gums

If you are experiencing any of these symptoms, schedule an appointment with your health care provider. If you have diabetes, early diagnosis and treatment can mean a lifetime of better health.

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