



## Tissue Recipient is Able to Compete in Mini-Triathlon



*(Left) Tissue recipient Katrina Steffes with her husband Zach. (Right) Katrina competes in a mini-triathlon*

Tissue Recipient Katrina Steffes is back on her feet after experiencing a Giant Cell tumor. “At first I thought I was sore from moving boxes at work, but it turned out to be much more than that. Katrina was first misdiagnosed with a torn rotator cuff. “My arm later broke and went untreated while we tried to figure out what was wrong.” At first, doctors thought Katrina had Ewing’s Sarcoma, a form of bone cancer.

“After a series of tests and seeing several orthopaedic specialists, an orthopaedic surgeon diagnosed me with a Giant Cell tumor.” Giant Cell tumors are usually benign, but the size of the tumor and the pressure it creates on adjacent tissues can cause cortical erosion of the bone beneath the tendon. The tumor can cause problems with dexterity and strength.

Katrina’s mobility was severely limited and she was in a lot of pain. Her entire right shoulder was destroyed by the tumor. “My husband had to help me do everything. He had to do all the cooking, cleaning and laundry. He had to help me get dressed and do normal everyday activities. I became very dependent on him. Even though our families live a few hours away, they were very helpful as well. They brought over meals so my husband wouldn’t have to cook every night. They also helped with cleaning and stayed with us after the surgery. I tried to stay active by reading and taking walks, but that was about all I could do.”

Finally, Katrina decided to have surgery. Her doctor explained her surgical options. “Rather than opting for a full prosthetic, I chose to have an allograft which included a prosthetic. My surgeon explained that I would have less mobility and function with a full prosthetic.” The procedure Katrina had is called a “reverse total shoulder.” She has a prosthetic shoulder that is attached to a rod that goes through the allograft that attaches to Katrina’s “good” bone lower in her arm.

“My entire family is registered to become donors. I am embarrassed to admit that I had not registered when all of this happened to me. This experience helped me to understand the importance of becoming a donor. I just didn’t understand donation. But you never know how your life will be affected by donation.” Since the surgery, Katrina has been able to accomplish many things that she was told that she would never be able to do again, including push-ups. Katrina was able to participate in a mini-triathlon several months after her surgery. For more information see Katrina’s You-Tube video at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CH9CbRdaLoU>.