

## Brotherly Bonds

Thirteen-year-old Logan Adams benefited from his brother's willingness to be a tissue and organ donor.

BY KAREN SHIDELER – THE WICHITA EAGLE

When Kyle Adams got his learner's permit, his parents asked whether he wanted to be an organ and tissue donor, should anything ever happen.

They never expected that his willingness would benefit his younger brother.

Kyle, 15, and his best friend, Sam Keys, were killed in a one-car accident west of Mulvane on Nov. 11, 2006. Not long after the accident, Kyle's parents, Katherine and Grady Adams of Mulvane, got a call from the Midwest Transplant Network.

"You're in just such a state of unbelievable shock," Katherine said. But they approved the donation, "just knowing he's going to be helping so many people."

Kyle's organs couldn't be used because he was dead when emergency crews arrived, but his tissue — bone, tendons, ligaments, corneas — was harvested.

The Adamses heard from a woman who got one of Kyle's corneas. She happened to be from Hope, Kan. "I thought that was neat," Katherine said.

The Adamses didn't think a lot more about their son's tissue until recently.

About a year ago, Logan Adams, who is 13, began to complain about his upper right arm hurting. He thought at first that it was the result of a throwing game in PE.

But the pain got worse, waking him at night.

He got a steroid shot, which helped, and he was able to throw shot and discus this past spring without problem. But when his arm started hurting again in June, his parents took him to an orthopedic surgeon, who referred them to another specialist in Kansas City.

Nothing was visible on an MRI or CT scan, but an X-ray showed new bone growth, which the specialist said pointed to a tumor.

In mid-September, Logan was scheduled for surgery to remove the tumor.

On the way to Kansas City, Logan said, his mom called the Musculoskeletal Transplant Foundation, which prepares bone, tendons and ligaments for transplant.

"I was just wondering if there was any of Kyle's bone left over," he remembered her asking.

Only one piece of Kyle's bone remained. It had been milled and shaped for possible back surgery. The surgeon requested it for Logan's use.

Before the procedure began, the surgeon thought he'd be able to grind the bone down and mix it with a synthetic to replace the bone in Logan's arm.

But with a cut, Kyle's bone fit perfectly. And an X-ray a couple of weeks ago showed it already was starting to grow. Logan's tumor was benign.

Katherine said the family knows things happen for a reason.

"It was God-directed for me to call," she said. "It was meant to be."

Katherine and Grady Adams have stepped up their organ and tissue donation advocacy. Grady and Logan recently attended a transplant conference in Kansas City, and Grady spoke about their family's story. Katherine hopes to meet with the Midwest Transplant Network to get better educated.

The Adamses hadn't known much about tissue donation before Kyle's death. They've since learned that bones, ligaments and tendons can be used in a number of ways. That they are prepared for transplant under conditions even more sterile than operating rooms. That tissue transplants don't require the recipient to take anti-rejection drugs, as organ recipients must do. That prosthetics can take the place of the tissue removed, so the body isn't disfigured for a funeral.

Had Kyle's bone not been available, the surgeon could have used all-synthetic material to fill the gap in Logan's arm, the Adamses said. They're not sure what will happen down the road — Logan's arm has started hurting again, and they're hoping to get to the Mayo Clinic for further evaluation.

In the meantime, Logan is glad to have a literal reminder of his brother.

"It feels good," he said. "To always have a piece of my brother in me is one of the best things I can think of."

Source: <http://www.kansas.com/entertainment/all/story/1078132.html>