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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHILDREN'S MERCY FIRST TO TWITTER ABOUT PEDIATRIC PLASTIC SURGERY *International Patient's Family to Follow Around the World*

Kansas City, MO – July 6, 2009 – At 3 p.m. CT, Tuesday, July 7, 2009, Children's Mercy Hospitals and Clinics will be the first hospital to use Twitter during a pediatric plastic surgery operation. The surgery will be performed on a 10-year-old international patient who suffered severe burns on his neck at a New Year's Eve fireworks event in his hometown 6 months ago. Plastic surgeon, [Virender "Vinny" Singhal, MD](#), Medical Director of the Cleft Palate/Craniofacial Section and Section Chief of Plastic Surgery, will be performing the surgery to insert tissue expanders into the patient's neck. The benefit of this surgery is that the patient will need fewer skin grafts, common for severe burns of this type, and heal faster.

After the burn, the patient's mother searched unsuccessfully for 2 months throughout Asia for adequate care for her son. After a frustrating search and multiple e-mails around the world, the mother found the [Children's Mercy International Patient Program](#) on the Internet. She applied for the program, and was grateful that Dr. Singhal had the expertise and availability to perform the necessary surgery on her son. The family arrived in Kansas City on July 1st, with the assistance of our International Patient Coordinator who helped them make arrangements to come to America for treatment. They will stay in the Kansas City area for 3-4 months while the patient recovers.

The surgery should take approximately 2 hours. Residents, Physician Assistants and other staff will be tweeting about the surgery from the operating room in real time, and answering questions from Twitter followers around the world. The patient's family has given their consent for the hospital to tweet about the surgery, and the patient's mother will be reading the tweets from the hospital waiting room. "We are excited about the opportunity to use our social media platforms to help a family stay informed, and educate medical professionals and the general public about this surgical procedure," says Dr. Singhal.

About Children's Mercy Hospitals and Clinics

Children's Mercy Hospitals and Clinics in Kansas City, Mo. is one of the nation's top, pediatric medical centers. Recognized by the American Nurses Credentialing Center for excellence in nursing services, and ranked in 2009 by *U.S. News & World Report* as one of "America's Best Children's Hospitals" for 5 specialties, Children's Mercy provides outstanding pediatric care for children from birth through the age of 18. With a 314-bed facility, Level IIIc neonatal intensive care unit, Level I pediatric trauma center, faculty of 600 pediatricians, and [40 subspecialties](#), it is one of the largest and most comprehensive pediatric medical centers in the country. In addition to a mission of caring for children regardless of their family's ability to pay, Children's Mercy is actively involved in clinical care, pediatric research, and educating the next generation of pediatric subspecialists. More information about Children's Mercy and its research can be found on our web site at ChildrensMercy.org. For breaking news and videos, follow us on [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#), and [Facebook](#).

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