

Lexie’s Story

“Your baby looks to have a cleft lip and palate.” The words ran through my head as I was on the sonogram table for a routine prenatal visit. After the initial shock wore off, I started researching hospitals and surgeons who specialized in cleft lip and palate. I was put in contact with Margie Beery, clinical nurse for Dr. Singhal and the Plastics Department at Children’s Mercy Hospital (CMH). I immediately knew that CMH was the place for our family.

In the next few months, while waiting for the baby to arrive, I spoke to Margie A LOT. She was always ready to answer any questions that I had, and gave me all sorts of resources to ease my mind in what to expect with the baby.

In September 2002 our baby girl was born in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The big shock came when I asked my husband, “How does her lip look?” His response was “She doesn’t have an ear.” WHAT?? The cleft was only part of the “adventure” of our little Lexie. She was born with Goldenhar Syndrome. She did have a cleft lip and palate, but was also missing her left ear, her left eye was small, her left jaw and cheekbone were missing, and the entire left side of her face was small and underdeveloped.

Lexie spent the first eight days of her life in PICU at the hospital in Oklahoma. When she was 14 days old, we made a trip to Kansas City to meet with Dr. Singhal and the craniofacial team. I finally met Margie face-to-face and it was like we were old friends. My husband and I had lots of questions, and felt like we must be the only people in the world with a baby like this one. Each member of the craniofacial team greeted us with a smile and a feeling of “Everything is going to be just fine...we see kids like Lexie all the time.”

In December of 2003 we moved our family to the Kansas City area, and CMH is only 40 minutes away instead of the 4 hours from Oklahoma. Lexie is now five years old and has had four major surgeries at CMH and five hospitalizations there. In April of this year Lexie had the most invasive surgery yet. Dr. Singhal removed two of her ribs and grafted them in to her face, to create a jaw and cheekbone. When we left the hospital Lexie said, “Can we come back next week Mom? That place was fun!”

The care, attention and love that my family received from the staff at CMH was outstanding. When anyone asks Lexie what she is going to be when she grows up she says, “A doctor at Children’s Mercy Hospital.” It brings a tear to my eye and warmth to my heart knowing the impact Children’s Mercy has on the life of our daughter. Lexie is a tough and sweet girl and I am thankful for our Children’s Mercy family.

Wendi Diskin - Olathe, Missouri



Lexie, 2 weeks old



@ Children’s Mercy in ICU after cleft lip repair



Lexie, 2 years old



Jaw & cheek surgery 2008