

FACES OF AMR PROFILE STORIES



Tori Kinamon

“These infections can happen to anyone. I went from being a completely healthy person to being thrown into the role of a sick person in a matter of a week and spending more than a month in the hospital. Is antimicrobial resistance really an issue for someone who is completely healthy? I’m here to tell you that, yes, it absolutely is.”

One week, Tori Kinamon was competing in the Ivy League gymnastics championships. The next, she was fighting an infection that threatened to take her leg – or worse. Kinamon always competed at the highest levels of gymnastics, and her dream came true when she was recruited to Brown University. At the end of her freshman year, however, her dream also led to an unexpected nightmare.

The day after her team won the championships, Kinamon started feeling a dull pain in her left leg. She didn’t remember getting injured or falling, but over the course of a few days, the pain got progressively worse. An x-ray didn’t show a fracture, but her leg was so tight that she wasn’t able to walk, and then it started swelling. Kinamon also started getting a fever, chills and night sweats – common symptoms of the flu, which was going around at the time.

Kinamon skipped her team’s competition and called her mom who offered to visit and help her deal with what they thought was the flu and a sore leg. As soon as her mom walked into Kinamon’s dorm room, however, she immediately took her to the emergency department.

In the hospital, doctors initially treated Kinamon with IV antibiotics, but she was already septic, and doctors ultimately decided Kinamon needed surgery after a CT scan revealed an abscess deep into her hamstring. Over the next two weeks, Kinamon endured eight surgeries – not knowing whether she would wake up with her leg after each surgery.

Along with surgery, Kinamon also needed antibiotics to fight what was discovered to be a MRSA infection. Doctors first used a broad-spectrum antibiotic along with a few others to see which one would work. Lab work showed that even though one of the antibiotics, vancomycin, was effective, it was toxic to her kidneys and so it had to be discontinued. Fortunately, a different antibiotic – daptomycin – worked and was available at the hospital. She was discharged from the hospital with a PICC line for six more weeks of IV antibiotics at home. After a lot of physical therapy, Kinamon ultimately returned to gymnastics until Achilles and ACL tears sidelined her for good.

Kinamon knows that she is one of the lucky ones. She was able to access antibiotics that she needed to save her leg and her life – but now, as a third-year medical student who is studying infectious disease – she knows that isn’t always the case. In fact, as rates of antimicrobial resistance are increasing globally, the existing stockpile of available antibiotics is not keeping pace.

Through her personal experience and her interest in medicine, Kinamon is committed to advocacy and telling her story, including at a recent [panel discussion](#) on Capitol Hill about the urgent need to address antimicrobial resistance. Through her medical studies at Duke and her research fellowship with the FDA, Kinamon has met with collegiate and professional athletes to educate them on infection-prevention and has been part of research teams examining the connection between athletes, infections and effective treatment.



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