



Friday, October 17, 2008  
Updated: October 19, 4:35 PM ET

## Source: UNC Asheville's George has part of right foot amputated

By Dana O'Neil  
ESPN.com

UNC Asheville senior [Kenny George](#) had part of his right foot amputated, a source confirmed to ESPN.com.

The source said the amputation, which occurred three weeks ago, was the result of George's battle with MRSA, a difficult-to-treat and sometimes life-threatening antibiotic-resistant staph infection.

The Asheville Citizen Times first reported the story.

In August, George returned to his Chicago home from Pete Newell's Big Man Camp in Las Vegas with an infection in his foot.

Doctors there suggested that George immediately see a specialist. He's been hospitalized in Iowa since then, the source said, enduring several surgeries and at one time battling for his life. He's expected to remain in the hospital for at least another month.

MRSA (methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*) is transmitted through skin-to-skin contact through openings in the skin.

Last month UNC Asheville said that George would not play this semester because of a foot infection but did not release further details.

George, at 7-foot-7 college basketball's tallest player, averaged 12.4 points and 7.0 rebounds for the Bulldogs last season. The Big South's defensive player of the year, he led them to a school-record 23 wins.

George's height and weight -- he was listed at 360 pounds last season and wore size 26 shoes -- is the result of an overactive pituitary gland. George, who stands 7-9 with shoes, could dunk flat-footed and towered over most players. But he had two major knee injuries, among other problems, and missed nearly three full seasons.

Coach Eddie Biedenbach declined to comment about the specifics but said he expects George to return to campus next semester and complete his degree in mass communications.

"This is a terrible setback for his basketball life but there is so much more to him than basketball," Biedenbach said. "The students at this school think the world of Kenny George outside of basketball. We're looking forward to him coming back second semester -- that's what he wants to do -- and complete his degree. At that point, we'd still like him to be a part of our basketball program and part of this school."

*Dana O'Neil covers college basketball for ESPN.com and can be reached at [espsoneil@live.com](mailto:espsoneil@live.com). The Associated Press contributed to this report.*

---

**ESPN.com:** [Help](#) | [PR Media Kit](#) | [Sales Media Kit](#) | [Report a Bug](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [News Archive](#) | [Site Map](#) | [ESPN Shop](#) | [Jobs at ESPN](#) | [Supplier Information](#)  
©2008 ESPN Internet Ventures. [Terms of Use](#) and [Privacy Policy](#) and [Safety Information/Your California Privacy Rights](#) are applicable to you. All rights reserved.