

High school athlete is back to the ballpark after spine surgery

Luke first noticed that he had pain and numbness radiating down into his leg as a freshman in high school. He played baseball his entire life growing up and now the pain was preventing him from trying out for the high school baseball team. “The pain made my normal activities difficult,” Luke remembers. “I was in the marching band which involved a lot of standing and marching which soon became agony.”

His mom Stephanie took Luke to an orthopedic surgeon who first thought the pain symptoms were related to a growth spurt, and recommended physical therapy. But after a month when the

symptoms never improved, the therapist recommended they get a second opinion with some X-rays. The X-rays then revealed grade 4 spondylolisthesis, a serious spinal fracture where a crack in the spinal vertebrae can cause the bones to shift out of correct position. The family traveled to four different centers to find a spine surgeon who was proficient in corrective surgery for the spondylolisthesis.

“In addition to seeing doctors in Austin, we traveled to Dallas and Houston,” remembers Luke’s mom Stephanie. “The orthopedic surgeons all had different opinions on the surgery that was needed, which concerned us.

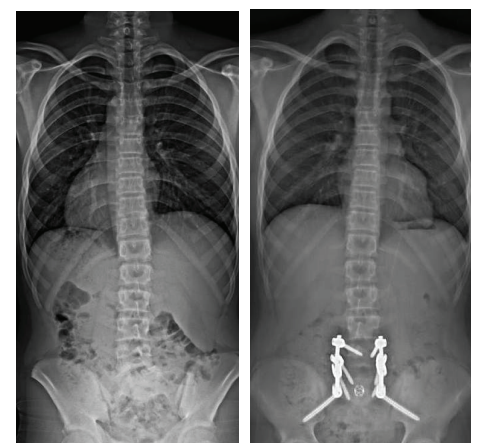
Ultimately a radiologist referred us to Dr. Geck in Austin. In our meeting, we felt that Dr. Geck was conservative. He was very comfortable to be around, and he connected with Luke.”

“We went ahead with Dr. Geck’s plan,” Stephanie adds. “The surgery took about six hours to about 3pm in the afternoon. Dr. Geck and the physician assistants and nursing staff were all amazing in their care of Luke and communicating with us after surgery. Dr. Geck and his PAs always knew what was going on and could communicate the next steps to us.”

Recovery from the major fusion surgery needed to repair the fracture took about three months. “I’m now able to do marching band with no problem, and made the high school baseball team where I play catcher and outfield all with zero pain.”



Luke noticed pain and numbness radiating into a leg, which made playing in the high school marching band agonizing. It also prevented him from playing baseball, a favorite activity growing up. X-rays revealed a grade 4 spondylolisthesis — a fracture of the bones in the low back which can cause the vertebrae to slip out of position and damage the spinal cord. They were referred to Dr. Matthew Geck who performed the necessary surgery to get Luke back to his favorite catcher position and the marching band.



The bones in Luke’s lower spine had a fracture that let the vertebrae shift out of position. Dr. Geck performed the necessary deformity surgery to stabilize the vertebrae and relieve pain symptoms.