

## 13-year old musician overcomes “Scheuermann’s Kyphosis” spinal deformity

**Devin** It’s not uncommon for students to claim that school makes them ill or uncomfortable. But for 13-year old Devin, she was telling the truth. Devin developed intense back pain during her seventh grade year and the pain caused from simple tasks such as sitting at a desk was awful.

“Devin’s school work really began to suffer,” remembers her mother. “She couldn’t focus because of the pain.” Originally Devin’s family just thought she had poor posture. “We were constantly urging her to stand up straight,” her mother remembers. “But she couldn’t. She is really big into music and posture is so important there but the pain in between her shoulders was too severe.”

Devin’s mother tried massaging her back to ease the pain but even that was wasted effort. They decided to seek medical attention after the pain wouldn’t subside. “I have worked in the chiropractic industry for many years,” her mother says. “So initially we visited a chiropractor who swore he could make the pain go away but based on my knowledge of the industry I just didn’t feel that was a reasonable promise.”

Internet research led Devin to SpineAustin and Dr. Geck. Devin and her mother felt a wave of comfort upon meeting Dr. Geck at their first visit. “He had a way of making you feel at ease right away,” Devin remembers. “He was very funny and

that really kind of took the edge off things. It was a very scary situation and he had a way of putting my worries at bay. I knew he was going to make the pain better.”

Devin was diagnosed with Scheuermann’s Kyphosis, which is a developmental condition that is basically excessive kyphosis and causes sufferers to have stooped forward posture. It’s actually very rare



for females to develop and more common in older males. Dr. Geck initially recommended pilates, which did aid Devin’s pain but didn’t put an end to it. Her condition was actually progressing so Dr. Geck then recommended surgery.

Fortunately for Devin, Dr. Geck was the first surgeon in Central Texas to perform the new “Ponte” approach for Scheuermann’s Kyphosis. The Ponte procedure

is less invasive because the spine is accessed from the back. The traditional method of correction would require the surgeon to access the front of the spine by going through the abdomen and working near vital organs and arteries.

“Dr. Geck was so compassionate during the whole surgery process,” remembers Devin’s mother. “It’s a pretty scary procedure and Dr. Geck was very successful in keeping us informed and answering any and all questions.” Devin remembers the SpineAustin staff being very knowledgeable but also very patient. “They really treated you like a human being and not just another patient,” she says. “They didn’t rush you and took time to answer all of your questions.”

Devin is now able to practice her music pain-free and enjoys playing the violin, electric bass and piano. She is also excelling academically and plans to graduate from high school one year early by taking summer school.

“She’s definitely an over-achiever,” her mother says. “I am so proud of her and happy that she is finally able to live her life fully and pain-free.”

*After undergoing surgery for Scheuermann’s Kyphosis, a rare spinal deformity, Devin is back to practicing her music pain-free.*

**Matthew J. Geck MD** is a board certified, fellowship trained orthopedic surgeon who has a practice focused exclusively on spine and scoliosis surgery. Dr. Geck is referred some of the most complex cases of adult scoliosis, cervical myelopathy (spinal cord compression), and pediatric scoliosis. Dr. Geck is a member of many prestigious spine societies, and has authored numerous peer reviewed journal articles, society abstracts, and book chapters on spine and scoliosis surgery. Dr. Geck performed his undergraduate work at the University of Wisconsin in the Medical Scholars program and graduated Phi Beta Kappa in 1992. He attended medical school at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and graduated in 1996 Alpha Omega Alpha. Dr. Geck performed his orthopedic surgery residency at the UCLA Medical Center, and was Chief Resident in 2000. To add to his adult and pediatric spine training, he elected to perform fellowships in spine surgery. He was certified by the American Board of Orthopaedic Surgery in 2003. He performed an ACGME approved spine fellowship in adult and pediatric spine surgery at Jackson Memorial Hospital. He then spent additional time at Miami Children’s Hospital focusing on complex spinal deformities such as scoliosis, kyphosis, and revision surgery for the previously operated scoliosis patient.



*Matthew Geck, MD, Spine & Scoliosis Surgeon*

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