

Scoliosis has not only changed my spine, but it has changed my life

Emma Carro My scoliosis Staff Reporter journey began when I was diagnosed in February of 2015, while I was in eighth grade. I had gone to a doctor's appointment for a checkup, and the doctor just happened to check to see if I had any signs of scoliosis, and I did. At the time, I was in denial that I had it because I knew it could be serious, and the idea of surgery scared me to death. We then went to see an orthopedic surgeon who determined that I had not only one, but two curves in my spine. At the time, the top curve was around 15 degrees, and the bottom one was around 30 degrees. The surgeon recommended that I get a brace to prevent any of the curves from getting worse. When I actually got the brace I did not realize how uncomfortable it was going to be to wear it, and I had to wear it for 16 hours a day. However, as time went on, I did not end up wearing it

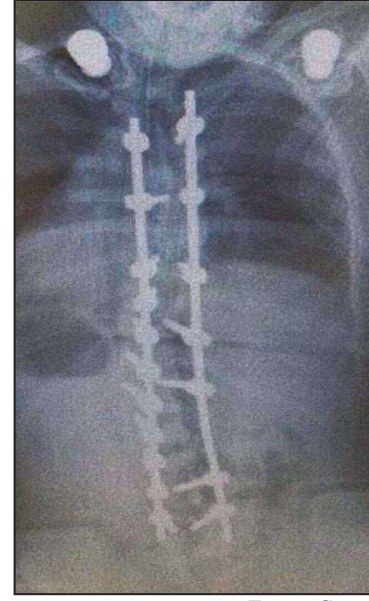


Emma Carro
Before the spinal surgery.

which made things worse. Fast forward to sophomore year, where things started to take a turn for the worse. By now I already knew my curves were getting bad, but I decided to join the swim team that year because I did not think it was going to affect my spine at all. At this point my scoliosis had progressed to around 50 degrees at the top and 60 degrees at the bottom. When the season ended, I was always in a lot of pain. On Sept. 7, 2018, I went to a new orthopedic surgeon, Dr. Setteceri. At that appointment, I was not expecting my life to be turned upside down. After new x-rays and measuring them, it was worse than I thought; the top curve was now 55 degrees and the bottom one was 65 degrees. Setteceri automatically said that surgery was my only option, and at that moment, I just went mute and wanted to cry, but there was nothing I could do about it. My surgery date was set to be on

Dec. 10 Within that next month, I underwent two magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans on my brain and all parts of my spine to make sure there were not any other problems. On Nov. 31, I had my pre-op appointment where Setteceri walked me through the surgery and what to expect when I was in the hospital. Before I knew it, it was the day of my surgery. I had to be at the hospital at 6:30 in the morning because my surgery was scheduled for 8:30. Right away, they took my mom and me back to get me prepped and ready. I remember having to wait for so long which was extremely nerve-racking, and after a couple hours, it was time to say goodbye to my family. Then, the last thing I remember was being wheeled into the operating room and having a bunch of medical people around me. My surgery ended up being a total of five and a half hours. They

placed a rod on each side of my spine along with 18 screws. Also, I was in the ICU for about a day where I began physical therapy and learned how to do basic things like walking and sitting up; and was in the hospital for a total of six days. Coming home, I knew the recovery process was not going to be easy, but as the days went on, things got better. Jan. 4 was my first post-op appointment, where Setteceri told me that everything looked good and that I was definitely a tough case for him because I am so small. Finally, going back to school I started with half days for the first week and then moved to full days gradually which was tough, but I have gotten used to it. And I never thought that after the surgery it would be something that to be proud of, but looking back at it I am glad it happened and now my story can be shared.



Emma Carro
After the spinal surgery.

Dance: an underappreciated sport

Madison White When dancers slip a pointe shoe on their feet, intricately tying their ribbons or lacing their tap shoes, many people may be underestimating them by saying that their passion is not a real sport. Dance takes time, energy, and commitment; as well as blood, sweat, and tears with drive. Usually dance is separated by competitive and non-competitive studios or companies, where dancers of all ages and genres learn choreography to represent their dance studio. There are so many different genres of dance. Many studios include not just traditional ballet and tap. At Dancetera Studio for Dance in Rossville, tap, hula, ballet, pointe, jazz, hip-hop, and many more classes are offered across the age spectrum. Dance teacher

at Dancetera Molly Marrocco has insight on what dance really is and why it is a sport. By teaching for 39 years, Marrocco knows her way through dance and everything about it. Dance has a serious impact on people from childhood all the way to adulthood. According to Marrocco, dance teaches children the importance of commitment. Not only does it teach them to get along with other children, take directions from the teacher, learn new things, and most importantly,



Madison White
Traditional pointe shoes that dancers use.

self confidence. However, the real question about dance that a lot of people wonder about is whether or not it is a sport. "Absolutely I believe that dance is a sport or as serious as other sports," Marrocco said. Dance is not usually considered a sport, even though it should be with the consistent perseverance it takes. Marrocco says that even though you may be doing the same steps as anyone else, everyone portrays the dance differently. In other sports,

tasks can be executed the same as each player with a different play or goal. In sports, everyone's goal is to win. With dance, everyone's goal is to perform well. With sports, comes injuries. The injuries in dance can vary. The most common injury in dance, according to Marrocco, is sprains. In pointe dancing, you wear "specially made shoes worn by ballerinas to allow them to dance on the tips of their toes," (pbt.org). You have to balance on the tips of your toes, performing choreography in ballet classes. Wearing pointe shoes for an extended amount of time can naturally cause calluses, aching of toes, bruising, and in extreme conditions, toe nails falling off. With hard work, blood, sweat, and tears, dancers live up to the definition of a sport, maybe even more.

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