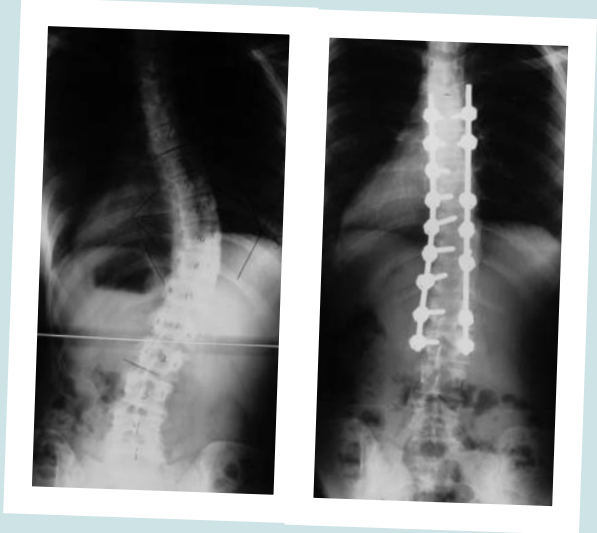


# BACK IN ACTION



*Scoliosis can cause the spine to twist and bend in an abnormal way. While the cause of scoliosis is unknown, it does tend to affect more women than men. Today, Stacy enjoys an active lifestyle and regular outdoor exercise including running.*

## Scoliosis surgery gets active career mom back on track

**Stacy** began developing her spinal curve when she was eight years old. “My dad noticed that my back didn’t look normal when I was in the fourth grade” she recalls. “The nurse at my school checked me out and agreed that I probably had scoliosis.”

Next, Stacy was examined by physicians in Midland and Dallas and until her junior year of high school she wore a back brace. The non-surgical approach of bracing is used to help improve the alignment of the spine and allow the spine to grow in a straighter fashion. Unfortunately, the back brace didn’t stop progression of Stacy’s spinal curve. By age 22, her spinal curve was at 56 degrees and causing severe back pain. The symptoms were so bad that Stacy could not even sit in a recliner.

Her husband, Derek, understood how important it was to find a spine physician that specialized in scoliosis and spinal disorders. He did research on the web and found a fellowship-trained scoliosis and

spine surgeon named Dr. Matthew Geck. Stacy soon made an appointment to see Dr. Geck. Her spinal curve was becoming so severe that it posed a risk to her internal organs. Dr. Geck explained the treatment option necessary to improve her spinal curvature. He explained that curvatures greater than 40 degrees will usually require surgery in order to correctly align the spine and fuse the vertebrae. Stacy realized that her condition would likely continue to worsen without surgery. Dr. Geck performed the spine surgery needed to correct her scoliosis.

“After surgery, the difference was instant,” Stacy exclaims. “Within the first several days I was up and walking around the hospital.” She even felt ready to get back to her work as a legal assistant.

The curve in Stacy’s spine was improved by more than an 80 percent correction, from 56 degrees to 12 degrees. The use of new spinal instrumentation techniques made this significant correction possible.

After scoliosis surgery, it is important for patients to avoid activity that puts stress on the spine. Stacy is a runner but she was limited to walking for the first six months. She would walk for up to a mile at a time though. “Dr. Geck gave me the okay to start running again after six months and I started out with running just a mile.” Within a year, Stacy was back to her normal activity of runs up to four miles at a time, a few days a week.

In 2007, Stacy and Derek welcomed a happy and healthy baby girl to their family. Her name is Avree. “Other women would talk of having back pain during pregnancy, this was not a problem for me at all,” Stacy remarks. Today, five years after her surgery, she continues to be pain-free and leads an active career and family life.

In her spare time, Stacy enjoys going to the park with her daughter, where they often run the trails. One of her next recreational goals is to complete a triathlon.