

Dalton's battle with cancer started in August of 2015 when he was 6 years old. He was diagnosed with medulloblastoma, a childhood cancer that develops in the cerebellum area of the brain. His tumor was removed at Pittsburgh Children's Hospital, and he then had 32 rounds of radiation treatments to his brain and 10 to his spine. After treatments, he was given a month to recover, and then he went through 7 months of chemotherapy. After the chemotherapy was finished, he was then monitored with MRIs every 3 months for 2 years, then every 6 months for 3 years.

After 5 years of no signs of cancer, an MRI in September of 2021 showed some growth in the area of the original tumor site. He then had an MRI of spine that showed a large tumor on his spinal cord in his upper back and a smaller tumor near his tailbone region. After dismal discussions with his oncologist in Pittsburgh, we decided to leave there and come to the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota for better quality of care. Once we arrived at the Mayo Clinic, we were greeted by some of the world's best doctors. We then were given a plan to remove the tumor from his spinal cord and treat the other two areas with a year-long chemotherapy regimen. 10 months after chemo, the tumor near the tailbone started to grow again. We then were offered a radiation treatment called Proton Beam Radiation for the lower tumor that would only affect the tumor and not any other healthy tissue. After 30 days of treatments, we went back home. A month later, after follow-up scans, it was determined to be successful in destroying that tumor.

In January of this year, an MRI showed some new growth on the tumor in the brain. We then were offered surgery to remove the tumor, and it was a successful surgery. A month after surgery, his incision on the back of his head and neck started leaking due to an infection. We then made the trip back to the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota for 3 more surgeries and a month-long stay to get rid of the infection that turned into spinal meningitis. After he was released from the hospital, we were asked to keep him here in Minnesota to be close to his doctors. After a lot of follow-up appointments, he was then cleared to start Proton Beam Radiation treatments on his brain. He is receiving 2 treatments a day for 20 days this time.

Dalton has had multiple surgeries, 19 months of chemotherapy treatments nearing 100 plus doses, and when these radiation treatments are completed, he will have had 112 doses of radiation throughout his body, more scans, doctor visits, blood work and other issues than I can count through the past 9 almost 10 years. He never complains and doesn't like to look back; he only looks forward. I do know he doesn't like to be the center of attention and doesn't like to talk about it to people; he just wants to be treated like a normal 15-year-old.