



## Jace Nerbas' Stollery Story

Jace was born November 30, 2015 and his Stollery story actually begins when his mom, Whitney, was 18 weeks pregnant with him. They found something on his kidney during an ultrasound. From that moment on he was watched very closely and was born at 34 weeks. When he was 6 weeks old they started the testing to see what was going on. He had one kidney that did not function but figured he would be ok if we just left it alone as everyone can live with only one kidney. When he was 2 years old he started to get really sick, he did not grow or gain weight for an entire year. With lots of testing and not finding the answer as to what was going on, his parents had to sign the papers for surgery. They were going to remove the dead kidney and see if that was what was making him so sick. His surgery ended up being on his 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday, November 30, 2018. During the surgery they found that his ureter was 4 times longer than it was supposed to be and was intertwining into his intestine. Surgery was a success and things were getting better. Jace sees specialists a few times a year and has frequent bloodwork to be sure his kidney is functioning properly and the growth is "normal" for his age. He does have hydronephrosis in his kidney but they are hopeful that he will grow out of it as his body grows.

In 2023 Jace's story took another path. He was very sick again, but this time it was different. He was unable to eat without severe pain, and was extremely tired all the time but not able to sleep because of the pain. He saw many doctors, dieticians, acupuncture and specialists, and finally was given medications to help as well as having scopes done to find out what was going on. On top of all this, being that his system was stressed, he also started to retain fluid which is a sign his kidney was not able to function properly. He is currently dealing with some kind of digestive disorder but we don't have a final diagnosis, and continue to be seeing the amazing staff at the Stollery.

Also in 2023 Jace had to cut his football season short, which broke his heart. It made for the next part of his story to be hard both physically and mentally. His Achilles tendons in both legs were too short, causing him to always walk and run on his toes and have severe pain in his legs. October 17, 2023 he had both legs casted in hopes that his tendons and muscles would stretch to the appropriate length. During his time in casts his football family showed up for him. He still went to practice to see his teammates, dressed in his falcons gear and went to the games to ensure his teammates knew he was still there for them. What was supposed to be an 8 week process, Jace knocked out of the park in just over 3 weeks, leaving the staff at the Stollery in shock. He was nervous but so proud of himself to be able to walk up the stairs and onto that stage at the year end banquet. He is still in recovery of building up his strength and endurance but is determined and working so hard. He is going to be back on that field for the 2024 tackle season and can't wait to SOAR with his teammates.