

Mayo Clinic News Network

Title: Getting Jake back in the game / Date: June, 2017

Intro: Major League Baseball's All-Star game is coming up July 11th, which has Texas Rangers pitcher Jake Diekman very excited. After the mid-season break, Diekman thinks he'll be well enough to get back on the mound. He's picked an all-star team of his own at Mayo Clinic to help him conquer the inflammatory bowel disease that has plagued him since childhood. Dennis Douda reports.

Video

Audio

Total running time [2:34]	/// VIDEO
Dennis Douda speaking	Phoenix, Arizona – spring training camp 2017 for the Texas Rangers – and even though Jake Diekman is mostly limited to cheering on his teammates from outside the baselines...
TITLE: Jake Diekman Texas Rangers pitcher	"I really never have sat out, like, this long, ever."
Dennis Douda speaking	The veteran relief pitcher says he wouldn't miss a day of it.
Jake Diekman speaking	"Um, this is like your family. It's like your second home."
Dennis Douda speaking	Diekman's teammates feel the same attachment to him. So the Rangers fully supported his decision to sit out the first half of the season to have a series of surgeries. He would quote, "gut it out" to try conquer a 20-year battle with ulcerative colitis – a chronic, inflammatory bowel disease.
TITLE: Robert Cima, M.D. Colon and Rectal Surgery Mayo Clinic	"He had been on multiple medications to try to control the inflammation. But it also can also make you lose weight. You can bleed. And, so, there are a lot of downstream effects of that..."
Dennis Douda speaking	...including painful cramps, diarrhea and severe fatigue – symptoms the 30-year-old Diekman decided a pro ball player could do without.
Dr. Robert Cima speaking	"Given the fact that it exclusively is a disease of the colon or rectum, that allows us to take the organ out and treat it surgically. And that operation involves taking the colon and rectum out, and making a small pouch out of the small intestine, hooking that up to the anus and then the patient will evacuate through this pouch through the anus."

	"Don't let it stop you. You can do anything you want. If you want to play baseball, want to play football, want to golf, be an accountant – want to do whatever – you can still do that."
Dennis Douda speaking	Dr. Cima says using three separate surgeries to reconfigure the digestive tract this way, a complex procedure called an ileal pouch anal anastomosis, cuts down on complications. So does using an experienced surgical team at an institution that's done it many times. And Mayo has performed about 4,000 of them. As for Jake's ultimate goal to fire up his baseball career again?
Dr. Robert Cima speaking	"There's no reason he can't. Once he's done with the surgeries and healed up from that last operation, other than the fact he has to keep himself hydrated, there's no limitation to what he can do."
Jake Diekman speaking	"That's gonna feel amazing to be able to, after all these surgeries, actually get back on the mound and, like, throw – throw, like, a bull pen, and actually get into a game. That's going to be an awesome feeling."
Dennis Douda speaking	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm Dennis Douda.

Anchor tag: Jake's last surgery to reconnect his intestine and eliminate his external pouch was on June 9th, and he is doing great. It's estimated 1.6 million Americans have inflammatory bowel disease, which includes ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease.