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## Terry Pittman determined to make full recovery after football injury

By Stephanie Moore



GREENVILLE, N.C. - It's been more than two months, since Red Oak Middle School student Terry Pittman was paralyzed after a hit during football practice. On Thursday, he was discharged from the Rehabilitation Center at Pitt County Memorial Hospital.

14-year-old Pittman was a starter on defense and in his first year of playing football for the Red Oak Tigers when he was seriously injured on September 20<sup>th</sup>. Since then, Pittman has proved that he's not giving up and his family says they've known he's a fighter all along.

"I kept working hard and I kept believing," said Terry. "I moved my toe...my big toe...my left one just moved up."

While his recovery has been difficult, he's stayed determined through all of it.

"The staff was really great especially therapists they're really nice and supportive...even though I had to wake up early in the morning, 7-o'clock every day...it's still worth it."

Pittman fractured three vertebrae when he took a hit during football practice. He lost some mobility in his arms, but couldn't move his legs at all.

"At first I didn't know what was going on at all but then when I found out I couldn't move my legs I didn't know what to think at first."

Since then, Pittman's recovery has been a roller coaster ride but his family says Terry is beating all the odds despite what doctors have said.

His parents, Terry and Tamara Pittman have been by his side through all of it.

When doctors told them their son had little chance of walking again they refused to give up and they continue to believe he'll make a full recovery.

"He's not far from it, so we're going to continue to believe and we're going to continue to pray and believe that God is going to bring him forward...that 100%," said Tamara Pittman, Terry's mother.

"At first it was hard seeing him sitting there," said his father, Terry Pittman. "When you see him look up at you and smile you say alright, everything's going to be alright and he's basically just been keeping us going."

Terry's mother says she was aware of the dangers of playing football but like most parents she wanted her son to go after his goals.

"I didn't want him to play but I didn't let my fear of what may happen stop him from doing something that he wanted to do," said Tamara Pittman. "Even after it happened I didn't have any regrets about allowing him to do it."

Terry says he doesn't have any regrets either.

"Football is football...people are still going to get hurt but it's a way you have to play it."

Pittman will continue his recovery at the Shepherd Center in Atlanta. His family is planning to go there on December 29<sup>th</sup>.

That's the same center where Rocky Mount Academy football player Colt Brake is recovering. Brake was also paralyzed, while making a tackle during a High School game in early October.

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