

Dr. Randy Goldstein

Board Certified Pediatrician  
with a Practice in Sports Medicine

[rgoldstein@wellbodykc.com](mailto:rgoldstein@wellbodykc.com)

Fax: 1-913-222-1907

## Bertolotti's Syndrome (also called sacralization, transitional lumbar vertebrae)

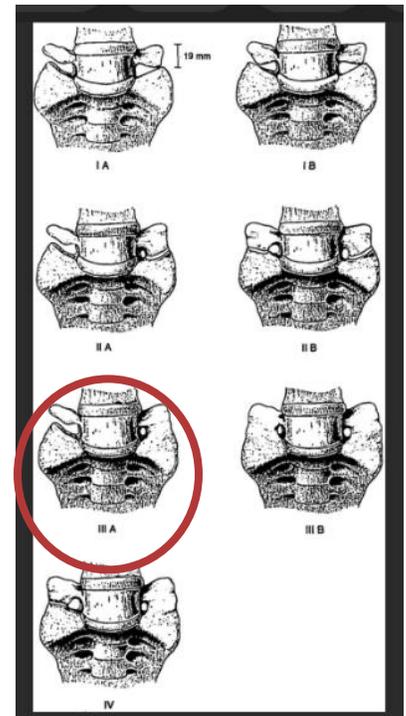
**You have imaging that suggests you have a connection (fibrous or bony) between your lowest lumbar vertebrae (L5) and your sacrum.** This may be contributing to your low back pain. Bertolotti's is something you were born with- it's not something you did and it has nothing to do with your activity/sport. But the activity you do may exacerbate pain because that area can't move like a normal joint.

Treatments include activity modification, PT, steroid injections, radiofrequency ablation, and, as a very last resort, surgery. Most don't do surgery though.

In fact, most people that do "normal adult daily activity" don't realize they have this abnormality; but athletes that demand certain movements are more likely to have pain. The pain will probably go away once the activity is stopped.

Circled in the diagram is the likely classification based on your x-ray. A CT would better define the type, but unless you are planning a surgery, it's not worth the radiation.

**If you would like to read more about Bertolotti's, here are some scientific articles:**



[A Comprehensive Update of the Treatment and Management of Bertolotti's Syndrome: A Best Practices Review - PMC \(nih.gov\)](#)

[Bertolotti's syndrome: an underdiagnosed cause for lower back pain - PubMed \(nih.gov\)](#)

[Bertolotti's syndrome: A commonly missed cause of back pain in young patients - PMC \(nih.gov\)](#)

