# Teenage Boy Undergoes Emergency Surgery After Unprovoked Attack in Watts Restaurant



Jason Rios, a 15-year-old from Watts, underwent emergency surgery after being attacked while eating at a restaurant in Freedom Plaza, Watts, on May 14, 2024. Just days after celebrating his birthday on May 10, Jason was assaulted by three boys while dining with a friend. The incident occurred without provocation, and no robbery was attempted, according to his family.

Jason, a straight-A student from Simon Tech High School, sustained severe head injuries and required an eight-hour emergency surgery at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center to stop brain bleeding. His friend was also hospitalized. Police have arrested one juvenile on suspicion of attempted murder, with two suspects still at large.

The attack happened shortly before 7 p.m. at the Habit Burger Grill’s outdoor patio. Jason managed to escape to a nearby Panda Express, where he contacted his mother but struggled to communicate due to head trauma. His family initially brought him to MLK Community Hospital, where his injuries were not immediately recognized.

After a CT scan revealed brain bleeding, Jason was transferred for surgery at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center. He had a second surgery on May 17. A GoFundMe campaign has been established to help cover his medical expenses.