



## Scoliosis

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### ★ What is Scoliosis?

To understand scoliosis you have to understand the normal anatomy of the spine. There are 4 normal curvatures that we all develop as we are growing. These curves occur in a forward-backward direction if you are looking at the spine from behind. Scoliosis is an atypical curvature of the spine that occurs when the spine curves to the right or left, as you are looking at someone from behind. There is typically a rotation of the spine at the involved segments as well. An official diagnosis and quantification of the severity of the curve is done through x-ray imaging.

#### ★ What causes Scoliosis?

**There are 3 different types of scoliosis:**

- \* **Congenital scoliosis**- the child is born with the lateral curvature due to an atypical development of the spine in utero (while the child is developing in the womb).
- \* **Neuromuscular scoliosis**- caused by an underlying neuromuscular condition that results in abnormal muscular pull on the spine. Conditions such as cerebral palsy or spina bifida are examples of underlying diagnoses that may result in neuromuscular scoliosis.
- \* **Idiopathic scoliosis**-this means that there is no known cause of the scoliosis. This is the most common form of scoliosis, and can present in childhood, adolescence, or adulthood.

#### ★ Does my child need therapy?

For mild cases of scoliosis that do not require surgery, physical therapy is an important piece of the conservative management of scoliosis to prevent further curvature of the spine.

#### ★ What would therapy involve?

Therapy will depend on the type of scoliosis that your child has, the severity of the curve, and if your child has pain. However, regardless of the cause of the scoliosis, treatment will focus on strengthening postural muscles to promote optimal posture with all functional positions and movements. Treatment of moderate curves may also involve the use of a brace for external support in order to prevent further deformity and progression of the curve.

#### ★ How long does therapy last?

Each child's course of therapy will be different, as each child will have a unique set of therapy needs and goals. However, consistent attendance at therapy along with consistent performance of the child's home exercise program will help the child attain maximum results.