

Children's Health



Screen To Keep Spine Trouble From Getting Worse

(NAPS)—The end of summer is a good time to re-establish healthy habits and back-to-school routines. In addition to dental checkups and annual physicals, pediatric medical specialists recommend adding a scoliosis screening to back-to-school checklists.

What Is Scoliosis?

Scoliosis, a musculoskeletal disorder that causes an abnormal curvature of the spine or backbone, is the most common deformity of the spine, affecting an estimated 6 to 9 million people in the United States. Although 10 percent of adolescents may have the condition, not all will need care. Early detection, however, can be key to successful treatment.

“Because most causes are unknown, it’s best to find the condition as early as possible to provide the best possible outcome,” explained Amer Samdani, M.D., chief of surgery for Shriners Hospitals for Children®—Philadelphia.

Signs And Symptoms

Children and teens with scoliosis rarely exhibit symptoms and sometimes the condition is not obvious until the curvature of the spine becomes severe. Some markers to watch for in a child who has scoliosis are:

- Clothes not fitting correctly or hems not hanging evenly
- Uneven shoulders, shoulder blades, ribs, hips or waist
- Entire body leaning to one side
- Appearance or texture of ribs sticking up on one side when bending forward
- Head not properly centered over the body.

Diagnosis and Treatment

When confirming a diagnosis of scoliosis, a doctor will review your child’s medical history, conduct a full examination, and discuss treatment with you and your child.

According to Dr. Samdani, there’s no one-size-fits-all treatment for scoliosis.

“Some cases will just need to be watched; others will need physical therapy, bracing or surgical procedures to stop the curve from progressing,” he



Before the school year starts can be a good time to screen for scoliosis.

said. “At Shriners Hospitals, we offer the whole spectrum of treatments under one roof. We also treat children regardless of the families’ ability to pay, so that often provides a huge relief to parents.”

Learn More

For more information on scoliosis screenings, care and treatment, visit www.shrinershospitalsforchildren.org/scoliosis.

App Helps Parents Detect Signs of Scoliosis

You can also check your child’s spine for scoliosis with the help of your smartphone through the SpineScreen app—available for free on the App Store and Google Play. For more information on the app and the importance of routine screening, go to www.shrinershospitalsforchildren.org/scoliosis.

If your child does have scoliosis or any other orthopaedic condition, you should know that Shriners Hospitals for Children has 20 locations in the United States, Mexico and Canada that provide expert orthopaedic care.