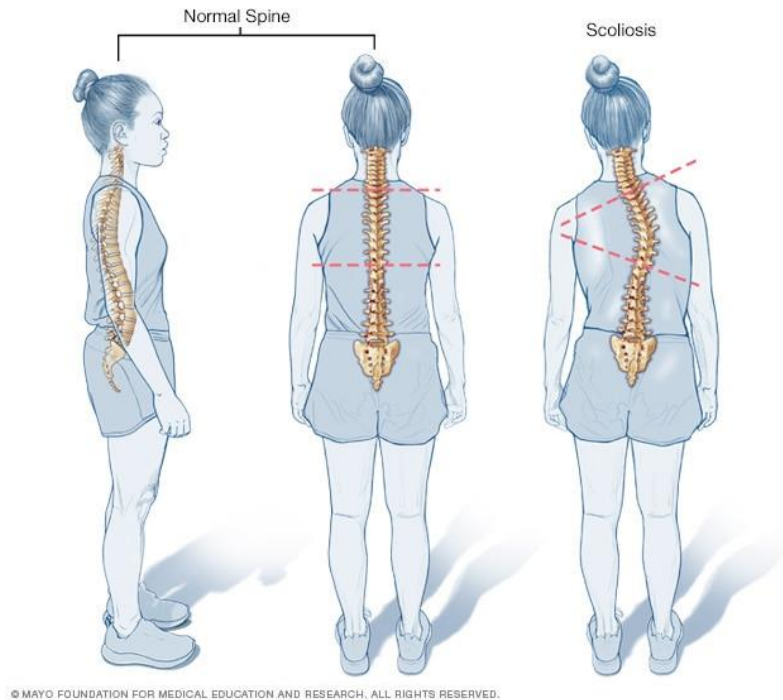


**When getting your child's 11yr. Immunizations, this is also the perfect time to have your child's doctor check for Scoliosis.**

## Scoliosis Fact Sheet



Scoliosis is somewhat of a mystery-no one really knows what causes the most common form of scoliosis, **idiopathic scoliosis**. The condition can be hereditary, so a person who has scoliosis often has family members who have it. Girls are prone to having scoliosis than boys. Girls over the age of 9 are five times more likely to be diagnosed with the condition than boys of the same age.

Scoliosis develops very gradually and isn't diagnosed until a person is between the ages of 10-14. **When your child gets their 11yr. well check-up, this is a good time to have their doctor screen for Scoliosis.**

**How is Scoliosis Diagnosed?** Some children have visible signs. Such as a curved spine, which is obvious, one shoulder blade is noticeably higher than the other one. Other times, it's not so obvious since scoliosis doesn't hurt or happen, suddenly, it's not always easy to diagnose.

**How Parents Can Help:** When your child is having a regular health checkup...ask your health care provider to check for scoliosis. Physical exams for school, sports, or summer camps are good times for scoliosis checks. Parents can be a big help in checking for early warning signs of

scoliosis. You may observe your child wearing clothing that is uneven in pant legs, or the hem of a dress. The earliest warning signs can be seen only with a clear look at your child's back.

**Dealing with Scoliosis:** With the right kind of treatment-whether it involves a brace or surgery- almost every child with scoliosis can have an active, normal life.

**What Do Doctors Do?** If it is determined that the curve isn't serious, your child may not need any treatment-just regular checkups to make sure the curve doesn't become larger. If the doctor wants to get a clearer view of your child's spine, they will order X-Rays. If the X-Rays shows there is significant curvature, your child will be referred to an orthopedist-a doctor trained in making decisions about scoliosis and similar conditions.

**Treatment:** Braces are worn by about 20% of children with scoliosis, and most children only need to wear them for 18-20 hours a day. Many are constructed of lightweight materials.

Sources: Getting Things Straight: Guide to Scoliosis, The Nemours Foundation

For more information contact The National Institute of Health