



Essence of Life Spinal Care

Essentialspinalcare.com

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# Scoliosis and chiropractic

## Safe & Conservative Help with Chiropractic



Scoliosis is a sideways curve of the spine that develops during childhood. Normally the spine only has curves front to back. If you were looking at someone with scoliosis from behind, their spine would have a "C" shape or possibly even an "S" shape, instead of a straight vertical line.

*Scoliosis may be reversible in some cases*

*Scoliosis is a sideways curve of the spine*

*Scoliosis is safe to treat with chiropractic*

*Scoliosis can be measured with X-rays*



### How does scoliosis happen?

Most cases of scoliosis are considered idiopathic, meaning the cause is not known, although suggestions in the literature have been made to genetic factors, hormone activity, postural alterations and nervous system development. The remaining cases of scoliosis are secondary to connective tissue disorders or neuromuscular disorders.

### How is scoliosis determined / measured?

A simple forward bending test (Adam's test) can be used to observe potential presence of rib prominence or "humping" on one side of the body. Uneven muscle tone or side to side appearance is also often seen with scoliosis. If rib prominence is seen, x-rays are taken and a measurement called the Cobb Angle is used to determine the degree of curvature in the spine.

### Can chiropractic help with scoliosis?

Currently there is a lack of enough scientific evidence to firmly draw conclusions on the ability of chiropractic care to reverse curves in scoliosis, however results from case studies and anatomical studies are very encouraging.

It appears that most successful cases of scoliosis management used a multi-modal approach, combining chiropractic adjustments with self-care exercise, bracing and other methods of rehabilitation. No single treatment method alone has been shown in the correction of scoliosis, however case studies and pilot studies indicate that early intervention with conservative care has the potential to stop or reverse the curvature, thereby reducing the need for more invasive or undesirable interventions later on.

Further, it appears that bone remodeling may be possible at any stage in life, meaning that correction of scoliosis may still be possible even later in life once skeletal maturity has been reached. Skeletally mature adults living with scoliosis can benefit from including chiropractic as part of their wellness routine.

### Should I be concerned about progression?

As long as your child is still growing, progression of scoliosis is possible (progression will end after skeletal maturity). Studies suggest females are at a greater risk of curve progression, with as much as a 10x greater risk compared to males.

Any degree of scoliosis is not ideal, however more severe side effects are typically not seen until the curvature is greater than 40 degrees. Side effects past this stage may include: moderate to severe back pain, pressure and altered function of internal organs and noticeable postural deformity. Fortunately curves greater than 40 degrees only occur in approximately 0.1% of the population.

### Suggested Scoliosis MANAGEMENT

**0-10 DEGREES**  
USUALLY UNDETECTABLE

**11-20 DEGREES**  
CHIROPRACTIC REHABILITATION /  
EXERCISE / MONITOR PROGRESSION

**21-40 DEGREES**  
CHIROPRACTIC MANAGEMENT + CONSIDER BRACING

**40+ DEGREES**  
CONSIDER SURGICAL INTERVENTION

