



Grant County Health Department

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Dear Parent,

During middle school years, it is important to have your child checked for scoliosis.

What is scoliosis?

A normal spine, when viewed from behind, appears straight. However, a spine affected by scoliosis shows a sideways curve.

What causes scoliosis?

In most cases, we don't know the cause of scoliosis. But doctors do know that scoliosis is more common in girls than boys, and it is often inherited from a parent. Scoliosis usually appears between the ages of 10 and 15, but can appear anytime the spine is growing.

Why is screening for scoliosis important?

It is important to find scoliosis as early as possible so that treatment can be provided. Without treatment scoliosis may get worse.

What are the signs of scoliosis?

Frequent signs are a bump over the shoulder blade; one shoulder or hip higher than the other; unequal distance between the arms and body, and clothes that "don't hang right." These signs are not always noticed and can be easily mistaken for poor posture.

What is the treatment for scoliosis?

In many instances, periodic supervision by a doctor is all that is necessary. When medical treatment becomes necessary, an orthopedic surgeon (bone specialist) may recommend a brace or surgery depending on the condition.

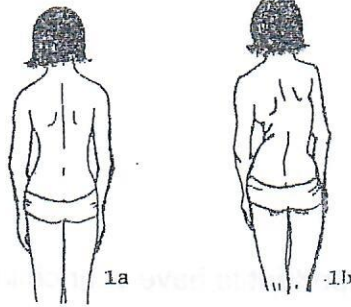
What can parents do?

Parents can check their child for scoliosis. See the back of this sheet. If you think that your child may have a problem, check with your health care provider.

Here is a simple way to check your child for scoliosis*

NORMAL

- head centered over mid-buttocks
- shoulders level
- shoulder blades level with no bumps or buldges
- hips level and equal on both sides
- equal distance between arms and body
- straight backbone

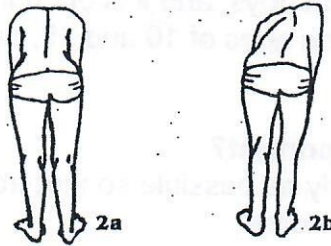


POSSIBLE SCOLIOSIS

- head tilted to one side of mid-buttocks
- one shoulder higher
- one shoulder blade higher with a possible bump or bulge
- one hip sticks out more than the other
- unequal distance between arms and body
- curved backbone

NORMAL

- both sides of upper and lower back are equal
- hips level and equal on both sides

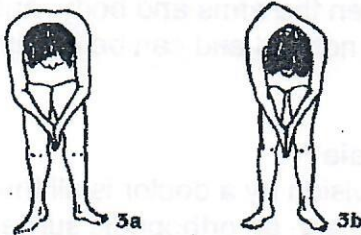


POSSIBLE SCOLIOSIS

- one side of rib cage and/or the lower back bulges out

NORMAL

- even and equal on both sides of the upper and lower back



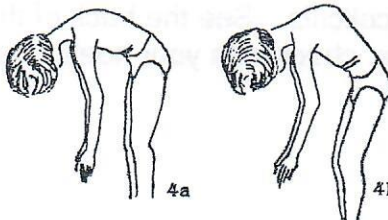
POSSIBLE SCOLIOSIS

- bump or bulge on the upper or lower back, or both

Also Screen for Kyphosis...

NORMAL

- smooth round even arc of the back



POSSIBLE KYPHOSIS ("round back")

- lack of smooth arc
- exaggerated roundness of back

* Courtesy of the National Scoliosis Foundation, Inc.
www.scoliosis.org