

LANCASTER MIDDLE SCHOOL

NOTICE TO PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

This notice contains information about **scoliosis**. Parents of students in Lancaster County Public Schools are encouraged to read this material in order to recognize this condition. If you have any questions, please contact your child's school nurse or your family physician. This educational information is being provided to all parents of students in grades 5-10 as required by the Code of Virginia 22.1-273.1, but only 7th graders will be screened.

SCOLIOSIS INFORMATION

OVERVIEW

Scoliosis is an abnormal curvature of the spine. While the normal spine has gentle natural curves that round the shoulders and make the lower back curve inward, scoliosis involves a deformity of the spinal column and rib cage. To varying degrees, the spine curves from side-to-side, and some of the spinal bones may rotate slightly, making the hips or shoulders appear uneven. This curving of the spine **cannot** be corrected by practicing good posture. Scoliosis occurs in healthy school-age children. Initial signs usually appear during the ages of 10-14 when a growth spurt may occur. The cause of scoliosis, in the majority of cases, is unknown. This condition may run in families and is seen more often in girls than boys. A large number of young people have minor curves that will not progress. Early screening and treatment may prevent scoliosis from progressing to a stage where it interferes with mobility or activities.

EARLY SCREENING

Scoliosis can go unnoticed in a child because it is rarely painful in the developmental years. Early detection is important to make sure the curve does not progress. If detected early, many cases can be controlled by a brace and/or specific exercises. If surgery is indicated the best results are obtained if it is completed before the curve is severe. Parents should watch for the following symptoms of scoliosis beginning when their child is about 8 years of age:

- A tilted head that does not line up over the hips.
- Uneven shoulders or a protruding shoulder blade
- Uneven waist
- One hip that is higher than the other causing an uneven hem or shirt line
- Leaning more to one side than another

The family doctor, pediatrician, or orthopedist should examine your child if any of these signs are present.

TREATMENT

The type of treatment used depends on the cause and how severe the curve. Spinal curvature is measured by degrees. Most curves remain small and need only to be watched by a doctor for any signs of progression. If a curve does progress, your physician may use an orthopedic brace to prevent it from getting worse. Children who require treatment with orthopedic braces can

continue to participate in the full range of physical and social activities. If a scoliosis curve is severe when it is first seen, or if treatment with a brace does not control the curve, surgery may be necessary. In these cases surgery has been found to be highly effective.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

ASSOCIATIONS:

United States Bone and Joint Decade (<http://usbjd.org>)

National Scoliosis Foundation (www.scoliosis.org).

Scoliosis Research Society (www.srs.org).

The Scoliosis Association, Inc. (www.scoliosis-assoc.org).

International Federation of Spine Associations (www.scoliosisrx.com).

American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons (www.aaos.org).

American Association of Neurological Surgeons (www.neurosurgery.org).

Mt. Sinai Hospital offers information on the spine at www.orthospine.com.

National Association of School Nurses (www.nasn.org).

SUPPORT WEBSITES:

iScoliosis - <http://www.iscoliosis.com/>

Scoliosis Alternatives- <http://www.scoliosis.homestead.com/index.html>

Scoliosis Care Foundation - <http://www.scoliosiscare.org>

Scoliosis Life - <http://www.scoliosislife.net/>

Scoliosis World - <http://www.scoliosis-world.com/>

SpineKids - <http://www.spinekids.com>

SCREENING FOR SCOLIOSIS WILL BE PERFORMED AT YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL ON SEPTEMBER 29 AND 30, 2016, THE SAME DAY AS THE HEARING/VISION SCREENING FOR 7TH GRADERS ONLY. The screening will be done by the school nurse and your child's privacy will be respected at all times during examination.

If your child has possible or obvious scoliosis, the nurse will notify you.

Fill out the bottom form for **REFUSAL** of scoliosis screening. Detach bottom portion and turn in refusal to homeroom teacher. Only turn this in if you **DO NOT** want your 7th grade child to have a scoliosis screening performed by the school nurse.

SCOLIOSIS SCREENING REFUSAL FORM

NAME _____

D.O.B. _____

HOMEROOM _____