



# CARE INSTRUCTIONS

KAISER PERMANENTE

## Scoliosis: After Your Child's Visit

### Your Kaiser Permanente Care Instructions

A normal spine—which is the line of bones going down your back—is usually straight or slightly curved. In scoliosis, the spine curves from side to side, often in an S or C shape. It may also be twisted. Scoliosis can affect adults, but it usually is found in children, especially girls between the ages of 10 and 16. Scoliosis can limit your child's growth. In very bad cases, your child's lungs may not be able to hold enough air. That can cause the heart to work harder to pump blood.

Young people who have scoliosis usually do not have symptoms, but some may have back pain.

If your child has mild scoliosis, he or she may need only to see a doctor every 4 to 6 months to make sure the curve is not getting worse. A child who has moderate scoliosis may need a brace. A brace usually stops the curve from getting worse, but it is not able to correct or straighten the spine. Scoliosis that is very bad may need surgery. Scoliosis and its treatment can be hard on a child. He or she may be embarrassed by wearing a brace. Think about taking your child to a scoliosis clinic, where other children are being treated. It may help your child cope with the condition.

**Follow-up care is a key part of your child's treatment and safety.** Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if your child is having problems. It's also a good idea to know your child's test results and keep a list of the medicines your child takes.

### How can you care for your child at home?

- Keep follow-up visits with your child's doctor.
- If your child has a brace, follow instructions for wearing it.
- Offer your child lots of hugs and emotional support. A child, especially a teen, who wears a brace may feel bad about himself or herself. If your child seems very sad or depressed for a long time, have your child talk to a counselor.

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- If your child has back pain, give an over-the-counter pain medicine, such as acetaminophen (Tylenol), ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), or naproxen (Aleve). Read and follow all instructions on the label. Do not give aspirin to anyone younger than 20. It has been linked to Reye syndrome, a serious illness.
- Do not give your child two or more pain medicines at the same time unless the doctor told you to. Many pain medicines have acetaminophen, which is Tylenol. Too much acetaminophen (Tylenol) can be harmful.
- Have your child get at least 1 hour of physical activity every day. This will help your child's overall health. Your child might like to swim, ride bikes, take a walk with the family, or do noncontact team sports as long as his or her doctor says it is okay.

## When should you call for help?

Watch closely for changes in your child's health, and be sure to contact your doctor if:

- Your child has back pain that is new or that gets worse.
- Your child has any problems wearing a brace.

## Where can you learn more?

Go to <http://www.kp.org>

Enter F961 in the search box to learn more about "**Scoliosis: After Your Child's Visit**".

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