CAN SCOLIOSIS BE CURED?
There are no miracle cures for scoliosis. It can be effectively controlled and even corrected to some extent. Correction depends on many factors, including age of the spine, severity of the curve, and may require follow-up throughout life. Early identification and treatment will produce the best end result.

IS SCOLIOSIS HEREDITARY?
There is a tendency for idiopathic scoliosis to occur in families. If someone is diagnosed, it is a good practice to have other family members checked.

WHAT ARE THE PROBLEMS OF UNTREATED SCOLIOSIS?
Untreated scoliosis can cause:
- Pressure on vital organs (most commonly the heart and lungs), decreasing their capacity later in life.
- Back and joint pain later in life.
- Decreased flexibility to perform skilled tasks.
- Changes in appearance that can lead to emotional and psychological problems.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN ONE IS REFERRED FOR FOLLOW-UP AS POSSIBLY HAVING SCOLIOSIS?
The forward bending tests show only the possibility of a curve being present. A physician must then examine the back. X-rays of the back, taken in the standing position, may be used to make a definitive diagnosis.

There are generally three approaches to treatment:
1. A mild curve should be watched and x-rayed at regular intervals to make sure it is not increasing. X-ray examination of the spine is the only objective measurement of curve progression.
2. A mild curve which has been shown to be progressing and moderate curves can be treated with spinal braces to stop progression when growth is completed.
3. A severe curve or one not readily controlled by other means could be recommended for surgical correction. The forward bending tests show only the possibility of a curve being present. A physician must then examine the back.

WHAT IS SCOLIOSIS?
Scoliosis is a lateral and rotary curve of the spine, normally the spine is straight when viewed from the back. In scoliosis, the spine twists to the side, as seen in the above picture.

Early detection and treatment is the key to possible prevention of serious spinal deformities. Key to possible prevention of serious spinal deformities is early detection and treatment of scoliosis. For further information:
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Health School Health Program P.O. Box 90 Harrisburg, PA 17108 (717) 787-2390

HOW DOES IT AFFECT YOU?
There is a tendency for idiopathic scoliosis to occur in families. If someone is diagnosed, it is a good practice to have other family members checked. Early detection and treatment is the key to possible prevention of serious spinal deformities.

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H307.001 (Rev. 3/03)
WHAT ARE THE CAUSES OF SCOLIOSIS?

IDIOPATHIC – A curve that has no known cause. 70% of all scoliosis detected is idiopathic.

CONGENITAL – A birth defect of the spine which occurs during the development of the body.

NEUROMUSCULAR – A curve which results from a muscular imbalance in the back.

INJURY TO THE SPINE

HOW IS SCOLIOSIS, USUALLY DETECTED?

A family member may notice a high shoulder or hip, a protrusion of one side of the back or chest, difficulty in fitting slacks, or an uneven hem. These findings could indicate scoliosis. A family member may notice a high shoulder or hip. Having a curve be examined by a physician may be one of the best ways to detect scoliosis early. Scoliosis should be detected before the curve progresses enough to be noticed in the above ways. Many times, if it is detected before the child reaches full bone growth, the curve may be reduced or kept from increasing. Annual screening programs, held in many school districts, can be reduced or kept from increasing. The “Forward Bending Test,” described in this pamphlet, is a simple way to detect scoliosis. A simple forward bending test is a simple way to detect scoliosis. The “Forward Bending Test,” described in this pamphlet, is a simple way to detect scoliosis. How is scoliosis, usually detected? In the spine, results from a muscular imbalance in the spine. A curve which occurs during the development of the spine is idiopathic. A curve that has no known cause. 70% of all scoliosis is idiopathic. A curve that has no known cause.

IDIOPATHIC SCOLIOSIS?

WHO IS MOST LIKELY TO HAVE SCOLIOSIS?

Severe scoliosis occurs in girls more often than in boys. Many people are not aware that they have scoliosis.

Who is most likely to have scoliosis?

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THE SIMPLE FORWARD BENDING TEST

When the child is in the standing position:

1. Are the shoulders level?
2. Are the hips level?
3. Is one shoulder blade more prominent than the other?
4. Are there unequal distances between the arms and the body?
5. Does the spine appear curved?
6. Is there a prominent hump on one side of the back when the child is bending forward?

Bending forward:

Have the child bend forward:

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