

# Five-step scoliosis screening process for healthcare professionals

Early detection of scoliosis is important. The earlier the condition is diagnosed, the more options are available to treat it. Below are helpful steps on how to screen for scoliosis.

1

First position:

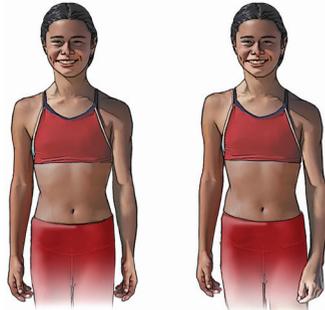
## Anterior view, standing position

Instructions to the child:

- Face the screener. Put your feet together with equal weight on both legs.
- Breathe in. Let it out, and relax your shoulders. Let your arms hang naturally at your sides.

Look for (see Fig. 1):

- Shoulder height asymmetry
- Unequal distance between arms and torso
- Hip prominence or asymmetry



Normal Fig. 1 Abnormal

2

Second position:

## Anterior view, Adams forward bend test

Instructions to the child (see Fig. 2a):

- Put your palms together with arms out straight.
- Put your chin on your chest and roll down until your hands touch your feet.

Encourage the child to continue to roll down as far as possible until her back is parallel to the floor. Have the child repeat the Adams forward bend test if she rolls down too quickly or if she rolls down to one side or the other. The child's hands should be pointing at her big toes.

Look for (see Fig. 2b):

- Upper thoracic asymmetry
- Lower thoracic asymmetry
- Lumbar asymmetry



Fig. 2a



Normal Fig. 2b Abnormal

3

Third position:

## Posterior view, standing position

Instructions to the child:

- Turn around (child's back is now to screener). Put your feet together with equal weight on both legs.
- Breathe in. Let it out and relax your shoulders. Let your arms hang naturally at your sides.

Look for (see Fig. 3):

- Shoulder height asymmetry
- Scapula prominence or asymmetry
- Unequal distance between arms and torso
- Waist crease asymmetry or no waist crease on one side
- Spine curved to one side



Normal Fig. 3 Abnormal

4

Fourth position:

## Posterior view, Adams forward bend test

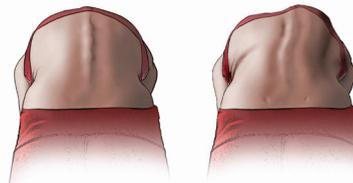
Instructions to the child:

- Put your palms together with arms out straight.
- Put your chin on your chest and roll down until your hands touch your feet.

Encourage the child to continue to roll down as far as possible until her back is parallel to the floor. Have the child repeat the Adams forward bend test if she rolls down too quickly or if she rolls down to one side or the other. The child's hands should be pointing at her big toes.

Look for (see Fig. 4):

- Upper thoracic asymmetry
- Lower thoracic asymmetry
- Lumbar asymmetry



Normal Fig. 4 Abnormal

5

Fifth position:

## Sagittal view, Adams forward bend test

Instructions to the child:

- Turn to the side. Put your feet together with equal weight on both legs.
- Put your palms together with arms out straight.
- Put your chin on your chest and roll down until your hands touch your feet.

Look for (see Fig. 5):

- Sharp angle/abnormal contour in low thoracic area (kyphosis)

Encourage the child to continue to roll down as far as possible until her back is parallel to the floor. Have the child repeat the Adams forward bend test if she rolls down too quickly or if she rolls down to one side or the other. The child's hands should be pointing at her big toes.



Normal Fig. 5 Abnormal

Visit [choa.org/scoliosis](http://choa.org/scoliosis) or call 404-255-1933 for more information.