

About our program

Our Scoliosis Screening Program has provided information and care for children and their families for more than 25 years. We partner with the Georgia Department of Education and the Georgia Department of Public Health, providing education and training to nurses in 159 counties and 181 school districts throughout the state.

We coordinate referrals to an orthopedic physician at one of our 14 Children's Physician Group–Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine locations for a complete evaluation and X-rays. The Scoliosis Screening Program can support families through the continuum of care by providing the following:

- A complete exam
- Low-dose X-ray technology that allows us to cut radiation exposure by up to 50 percent compared to adult facilities
- Communication to primary care physician about follow-up care
- Recommendations for orthopedic follow-up care
- Education and resources on treatment options



Call **404-785-7553** for an appointment
or visit choa.org/scoliosis to learn more.



Children'sSM
Healthcare of Atlanta

choa.org/scoliosis

Scoliosis

Stay ahead of the curve



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Early detection can give your child more treatment options in the future.

What is scoliosis?

Scoliosis is a sideways curve of the spine. The curve can make the spine look like an "s" or a "c" rather than a straight line when viewed from the back. Scoliosis also can make the spine rotate. This can make the shoulders or waist look uneven.

Signs your child may have scoliosis include:

- Uneven shoulders and shoulder blades
- Unequal distance between arms and body
- Uneven hips
- Rib hump (also called rib prominence)
- Lower back hump (also called lumbar prominence)
- More than normal roundness when viewed from the side

About 2 to 3 percent of children have scoliosis. The cause is usually not known. Most children will not have harmful long-term effects. Some children will develop serious problems later in life if the condition is not treated. A curve in the spine can get worse quickly during the teen years.

Scoliosis is best treated when found early. It can be hard to tell if your child has scoliosis. It is important for your child to have an exam done by trained screeners in school or at your child's doctor's office. More serious treatments for scoliosis can sometimes be avoided when scoliosis is found early.



Elevated shoulder and shoulder blades



Unequal distance between arms and body



Uneven hips



Rib prominence



Lumbar (lower back) prominence



More than normal roundness

How do I know if my child has scoliosis?

A screening is the best way to learn if your child may have scoliosis.

- These screenings can be done at your child's school or doctor's office.
- Screening is simple and painless. It only takes about one minute.
- Screening only detects possible scoliosis.

What if scoliosis is suspected?

Children who have signs of scoliosis based on an initial school screening will need to go to the doctor or the Children's Healthcare of Atlanta Scoliosis Screening Program for a full exam and X-ray, if needed.

- Some referred children and teens require a follow-up at six months or one year.
- A few children and teens may need medical treatment such as bracing or surgery.
- Generally there are no restrictions on sports or activities during checkups or while a curve is being monitored.

How can I be sure my child is screened for scoliosis?

- Children ages 9 through 16 should be screened for scoliosis each year.
- Your child also can be screened at the doctor's office.
- Georgia public school systems offer free screenings during the middle school years.