

Mayo Clinic News Network

Title: Mayo Clinic Minute: Scoliosis screening Date: August 16, 2017

Intro: Back-to-school physical exams are a good time to ask your child's doctor about screening for scoliosis. Two to 3 percent of the population is affected by this sideways curvature of the spine. The condition is often minor, but, for those who do need medical treatment, early detection may prevent severe and painful deformities.

"Certainly, getting diagnosed with scoliosis can be scary," says Dr. Jeremy Fogelson, a Mayo Clinic neurosurgeon. "Many people think of big braces that are uncomfortable or surgery that needs to be performed. But there are a lot of different treatment options." Dennis Douda reports for the Mayo Clinic News Network.

Video

Audio

Total running time [0:59]	/// VIDEO
TITLE: Jeremy Fogelson, M.D. Neurosurgery Mayo Clinic	"When you look at the side of the spine, there's supposed to be a natural curvature, but on a front or a back view of the spine, it should be straight up and down. Scoliosis is the curvature of the spine that's abnormal. Sometimes patients will notice it, because their shoulders aren't level or they don't feel their ribs are symmetric."
Dennis Douda speaking	Neurosurgeon Dr. Jeremy Fogelson says the waist or hips may also appear uneven, or one shoulder blade may be more prominent.
Dr. Jeremy Fogelson speaking	"It's usually diagnosed by your primary care provider. Screening can be done during childhood, which is the most frequent time to find it."
Dennis Douda speaking	Often, scoliosis appears during a growth spurt just before puberty. In some cases, spinal disc removal and metal rods are required to realign the vertebrae.
Dr. Jeremy Fogelson speaking	"It's important to catch it early, because, many times, surgery can be avoided if it's treated properly with a brace. Sometimes it's as simple as physical therapy to help keep the spine limber and strong. Sometimes medications, like anti-inflammatory medications, can help."
Dennis Douda speaking	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm Dennis Douda.

Anchor tag: Dr. Fogelson says, frequently, scoliosis can be treated very well, giving patients a good quality of life without limitations on their activities. One other note – he says it tends to be hereditary, so family history may be important to the diagnosis.