

Let's Talk About Scoliosis

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Hello everyone!

My name is [NAME] and today I'm going to talk to you about something called scoliosis. Before we start, has anyone heard of scoliosis before?

That's okay if you haven't - lots of people haven't. Today we're going to learn what it is, what signs we can look out for, and why it's important to talk about it.

What is Scoliosis?

Your spine is the strong line of bones that runs down the middle of your back. It helps you stand, move and keep your balance.

Scoliosis is when the spine curves and sometimes twists, rather than growing in a straight line.

The curve can look a bit like an "S" shape or a "C" shape.

Scoliosis can happen to anyone, but it is most commonly noticed in children and teenagers while they are growing.

It is not a disease, it is not contagious, and you cannot catch it from someone else.

Around 2-3 out of every 100 people have scoliosis, and some people may not even know they have it.

What Can Scoliosis Look Like?

Sometimes scoliosis is easy to spot, and sometimes it is not.

Some signs can include:

- One shoulder being higher than the other
- One hip sticking out more
- Uneven waist or back
- A shoulder blade or ribs sticking out slightly

Remember - everyone's body is different. Seeing one of these signs does not mean someone definitely has scoliosis, but it is something worth checking.

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Different Types of Scoliosis

There are different types of scoliosis.

The most common type is called Adolescent Idiopathic Scoliosis, which usually develops between the ages of 10 and 15.

The word "idiopathic" means doctors do not always know exactly why it happens. Other types can happen because of how the spine develops, other conditions, or changes as people get older.

But the important thing to remember is:

Every person with scoliosis is different, and everyone's experience is unique.

Famous People With Scoliosis

Having scoliosis does not stop people achieving amazing things.

Some people with scoliosis include:

- Usain Bolt – Olympic champion sprinter
- Princess Eugenie – who had surgery for scoliosis as a child and now raises awareness
- Naomie Harris – actress known for films including James Bond
- Gabby Allen – dancer and television personality

Having scoliosis is just one part of someone's story.

How Can We Spot Signs?

A simple way to remember some signs is the ABCD of Scoliosis.

A – Asymmetry

Do the shoulders, hips or waist look uneven?

B – Bend Forward

When someone bends forward, does one side of their back or ribs look higher?

C – Check for a Curve

Does the spine look like an S or C shape?

D – Diagnosis

Only a healthcare professional can confirm scoliosis. They may use an X-ray to check the spine.

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Why Does It Matter?

Finding scoliosis early means someone can get the right support sooner.

Sometimes scoliosis only needs regular check-ups.

Sometimes people may need treatments like:

- A brace to help stop the curve getting worse while they grow
- Surgery for larger curves

The treatment depends on the person and their spine.

What Should You Do?

If you notice something unusual about your back, or you are worried about yourself or someone else:

Talk to a trusted adult.

This could be:

- A parent or guardian
- A teacher
- A school nurse
- A doctor

Remember: Scoliosis is nobody's fault, and asking questions is always okay.

What Can YOU Do?

Everyone can help raise awareness.

 Be observant

Notice changes and look out for your friends.

 Talk about it

Help people understand that scoliosis is common and nothing to be embarrassed about.

 Raise awareness

Share what you have learned with your family and friends.

 Ask questions

Speaking up helps people get support.