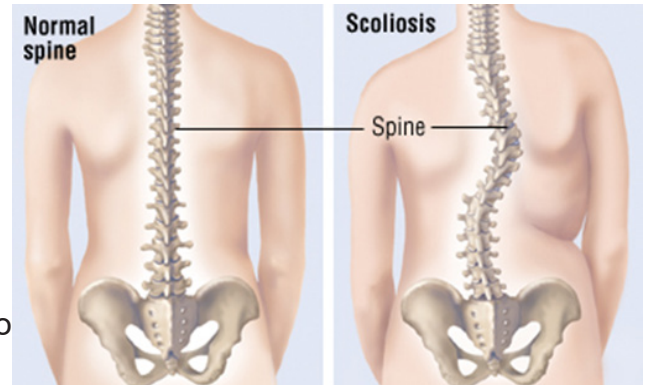


Anterior/Posterior Scoliosis Correction Information for young people

What is scoliosis?

A scoliosis is an abnormal curvature of the spine (back bones). A scoliosis can develop for a number of reasons and varies enormously in severity between individuals. There are many different types of scoliosis based on age and the type of curve however the most common scoliosis is known as AIS (adolescent idiopathic scoliosis). This means that a curve in the spine develops in adolescent years for no known cause. A curve can develop at any part of the spine and can be either a single or multiple curves resulting in a 'C' or 'S' shape when looking from behind.

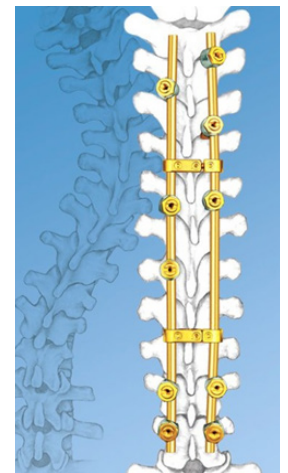


Why am I having surgery?

Surgery is only considered for scoliosis when your curve becomes more severe or it has a significant effect on your day to day functioning. There are several different types of operation that can be considered to correct your curve and these will be discussed with you by your consultant.

What happens during surgery?

Once you are asleep your surgeon will make two incisions. The first will be at your side which allows access to the front of your spine. The second will be through the skin and muscles over your back. To access the front of your spine one of your lungs will be deflated during your surgery. Your consultant will then straighten your spine as much as it is safely possible to do so and a series of metal rods, screws and hooks will be inserted to hold the correction whilst your bones heal. To help your lung re-inflate properly you will have a chest drain inserted on the side of the incision.



Going home – what to expect after your surgery

Walking

You will be seen by the physiotherapists the day after your surgery. They will check that your legs are working normally and that your chest (breathing) is OK. You will normally be allowed to start sitting up and standing with the assistance of the physiotherapists the day after your surgery. You will be shown how to safely get in and out of bed by 'log-rolling' to protect your spine and you will be assisted to start walking and sitting out in a chair. By the time you go home you will be walking around the ward on your own. You will also be shown how to get up and down stairs safely.



Anterior/Posterior Scoliosis Correction

Breathing Exercises

Due to the length of anaesthetic and nature of your surgery it is extremely important that you complete some breathing exercises following your surgery. These will help to ensure that your lung re-inflates properly and prevent complications such as chest inflection or collections of fluid around your lungs. You will be shown some breathing exercises to encourage you to take deep breaths and cough effectively. You will need to continue completing these whilst you are in hospital and also once you go home.



Other exercises

You will not be given any specific exercises for your back as it is essential that the bones heal properly. You are advised not to complete any form of bending, lifting or twisting for 6 weeks after your surgery. After this time you will be guided by your consultant. At home it is important that you gradually increase how much you are walking around, continue with your breathing and arm exercises and complete any postural advice that you may have been given by your physiotherapist on the ward.

Caring for yourself

It is important that you start to complete your normal daily routine as soon as possible after your surgery. It is expected that you will need some assistance (either from your parents or the nursing staff) to begin with however by the time you go home you should be able to get in/out of bed and care for yourself as you would normally do so. You will have been assessed by the occupational Therapist for any additional equipment that you may need to make things easier at home.

Pain relief

You will normally have an epidural for pain relief after your surgery. This can make parts of your legs feel a bit numb after your operation. Due to the nature of your surgery it is expected that you will experience some pain afterwards. You will be provided with some painkillers to help with this. It is important to take these as prescribed to keep pain to a minimum and allow you to mobilise.

Wound care

Your wounds will need to be kept clean and dry. The nursing staff will provide you with more information about wound care on discharge.

School/College

You are not allowed to go back to school for 6 weeks following your surgery, this is to protect your back and allow it to start healing properly. When you come back to hospital for your 6 week clinic check you will be advised if you can go back to school or not. It is advisable that you (or your parents) discuss this with your school as soon as possible as they may need to make appropriate plans for you.

Sports and hobbies

You will not be allowed to complete any form of leisure or sporting activities for several months following your surgery. Your consultant or physiotherapist on the ward can advise you further on this.

Instructions for after your surgery
