

High mortality, morbidity with early-onset scoliosis surgery

March 25 2013



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(HealthDay)—Surgery for patients with early-onset scoliosis is associated with an 18 percent mortality rate and an 84 percent complication rate, according to research published in the Feb. 15 issue of *Spine*.

Jonathan H. Phillips, M.D., of the Orlando Health-Arnold Palmer Medical Center in Florida, and colleagues performed a retrospective chart review of 165 surgical procedures performed on 28 patients in an effort to accurately measure mortality and complication rates in patients surgically treated for early-onset scoliosis.

Patients had been diagnosed with congenital [scoliosis](#), syndromic and

[chromosomal abnormalities](#), cerebral palsy, and [spinal muscular atrophy](#). The researchers found that, overall, the mortality rate was 18 percent and the complication rate was 84 percent. Although the mortality rate was similar between those performed at the authors' center or another center, the [complication rate](#) was lower for those whose entire surgical course had been at the authors' institution.

"The present study, underlines the grave severity of these scolioses particularly in syndromic children," the authors write. "We do not know for certain the outcome of these disease processes untreated, but must continue to develop techniques and implants that maximize outcomes while preserving pulmonary function, and thus minimizing mortality and morbidity with acceptable quality of life."

One or more of the authors report they may receive benefits from commercial parties related to their subject.

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Citation: High mortality, morbidity with early-onset scoliosis surgery (2013, March 25) retrieved 23 April 2024 from
<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2013-03-high-mortality-morbidity-early-onset-scoliosis.html>

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