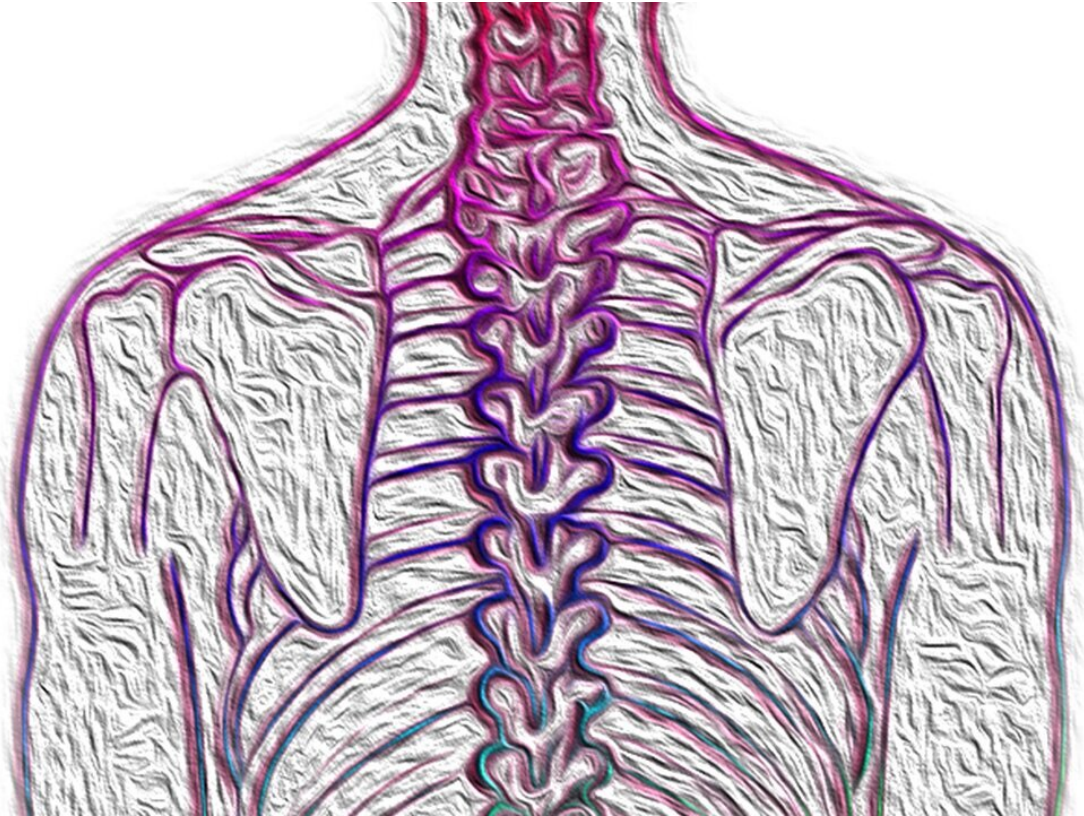


Correcting the curve with scoliosis surgery

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Scoliosis is a condition that causes the spine to curve. It often is diagnosed in children—perhaps during a growth spurt or in and around the time of puberty. However, it can be associated with other conditions such as arthritis, osteoporosis, infection or injuries to the spine. There are also other conditions, including congenital or neuromuscular

diseases, that can contribute to a curvature.

Surgery is usually a last resort to fix the problem. And as Dr. Jamal McClendon Jr., a Mayo Clinic neurosurgeon, explains, new technology and techniques have improved the safety and [recovery time](#) for patients who have surgery to correct the curve.

Most people with scoliosis have a mild spinal curve that can be monitored by their health care team over time or treated with a back brace and physical therapy.

"Most individuals who we see, or I see, in the office, greater than 90% do not need any form of a procedure," says Dr. McClendon.

But when surgery is necessary, it's usually minimally invasive, improving safety and recovery time.

"The future is very bright as far as keeping things very safe for patients who need to undergo these operations. We try to keep things as small as possible, particularly if there's quite a bit of growth remaining in our [young patients](#)," says Dr. McClendon. "There are some individuals who have very large curvatures or large progressions of curves in which we have to do some operations with [limited mobility](#), but then we may just have to restrict to some activities. But they still can lead very, very active lifestyles.

"Scoliosis is a condition that is very treatable. Having a good relationship with the scoliosis doctor and scoliosis team overall helps with the [long-term planning](#) as it relates to making sure that curves don't progress. And if they do progress, that you have a provider who is focused on you as the individual so they can tailor a treatment accordingly."

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