HOME EXERCISE PROGRAM FOR SCOLIOSIS
PATIENT INSTRUCTIONS

Scoliosis is a term used to describe any abnormal, sideways curvature of the spine. Viewed from the back, a typical spine is straight. With scoliosis, the spine can curve in one of three ways:

- The spine can curve to the left, shaped like the letter “C”
- The spine can curve to the right, shaped like a backwards letter “C”
- The spine has two curves, shaped like the letter “S”

The spine can be considered as building blocks, similar to the figure above. The long side of the block represents lengthening (stretching) of your muscles. The short end of the block illustrates shortening (contracting) of your muscles. Both extremes affect your ability to use your back muscles appropriately for posture and functional activities. Therefore, it is important to attain and maintain a straight spine in order for your muscles to be used at their full functional level. To do so, you must become more aware of your body, especially your spine, in order to use self-correction to change your spine’s position during daily activities.

For practice, the following exercises will focus on core strengthening, proprioception, and posture. Scoliosis exercises should be done carefully and performed with proper technique. Remember, the goal is to promote symmetry within the spine to regain trunk alignment.
1) Core Strength:
Your core muscles include your abdominal muscles, back muscles and muscles around the pelvis. These muscles are designed to protect the spine by creating a sturdy rod that limits excessive movement in any direction. Strong core muscles make it easier to do many physical activities.

2) Proprioception:
Proprioception is the sense of the body in space regarding position, motion, and equilibrium. It uses receptors located in the skin, muscles and joints to build the internal sense of your body.

3) Posture:
Your spine is strong and stable when you practice healthy posture. But when you stoop or slouch, your muscles and ligaments struggle to keep your body upright and balanced. Poor posture can stress or pull muscles, which may lead to pain. It is important that you practice and maintain good posture throughout the day. The more you practice good posture, the more natural it will feel.
Although good posture should be natural, you might feel stiff and awkward at first. The key is to practice good posture all the time.
EXERCISES

1) Pelvic Tilts

Lying on back with knees bent and feet flat on the floor. Flatten back by tightening stomach muscles and buttocks. Hold for 5 seconds, breathing normally.

Repeat __10__ times per set. Do __2__ sets per session. Do __1__ sessions per day.

2) Cat-Camel

On hands and knees, maintain tight abdominals with head straight (Photo 1). Take a deep breath in and lift your lower rib cage, round your back and relax your neck (Photo 2). As you breathe out, lower your chest towards the floor, looking slightly upward. Return to beginning position with tight abdominals.

Repeat __10__ times per set. Do __2__ sets per session. Do __1__ sessions per day.
3) Double-Leg Abdominal Press

Lying on back with knees bent and feet flat on the floor (Photo 1), keeping your back in a neutral position. Raise your legs off the floor one at a time so that your knees and hips are bent at 90° angles (Photo 2, 3).

Push your hands against your knees while pulling your knees toward your hands, which will engage your abdominal muscles (Photo 4). Keep your arms straight! Hold for three deep breaths.

Repeat __10__ times per set. Do __2__ sets per session. Do __1__ sessions per day.
4) Single Leg Balance (If possible, perform in front of a mirror to help visualize a straight spine.)

With your eyes open, bend one knee up and balance on one foot. At first you may use your hands, like holding the back of a chair, table, or the wall. As balancing gets easier, take your hand(s) away and place them out to the side. Challenge yourself by bringing your arms across your chest. Close your eyes for an even greater challenge.

Repeat __5__ times per set. Do __1__ sets per session. Do __1__ sessions per day.

Hold for 10-20 seconds
Repeat on both legs
5) Tea Pot (If possible, perform in front of a mirror to help visualize a straight spine.)

LEFT CURVE
Sit on your knees. Place left hand on top of left shoulder and right hand on the floor. Lean towards your right hip. Feel the stretch on the right side of your trunk.
Hold for __20__ seconds. Repeat __5__ times.

RIGHT CURVE
Sit on your knees. Place right hand on top of right shoulder and left hand on the floor. Lean towards your left hip. Feel the stretch on the left side of your trunk.
Hold for __20__ seconds. Repeat __5__ times.

6) Side Shift

LEFT CURVE:
Use left arm against wall and lean hips towards the left side.

RIGHT CURVE:
Use right arm against wall and lean hips towards the right side.

Stand next to a wall placing your arm bent on the wall. Your other arm should be rested on your side as shown. Lean towards the wall by moving your hips NOT your shoulder. This will cause a shifting motion at your pelvis to occur.

Repeat __10__ times per set. Do __2__ sets per session. Do __1__ sessions per day.

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