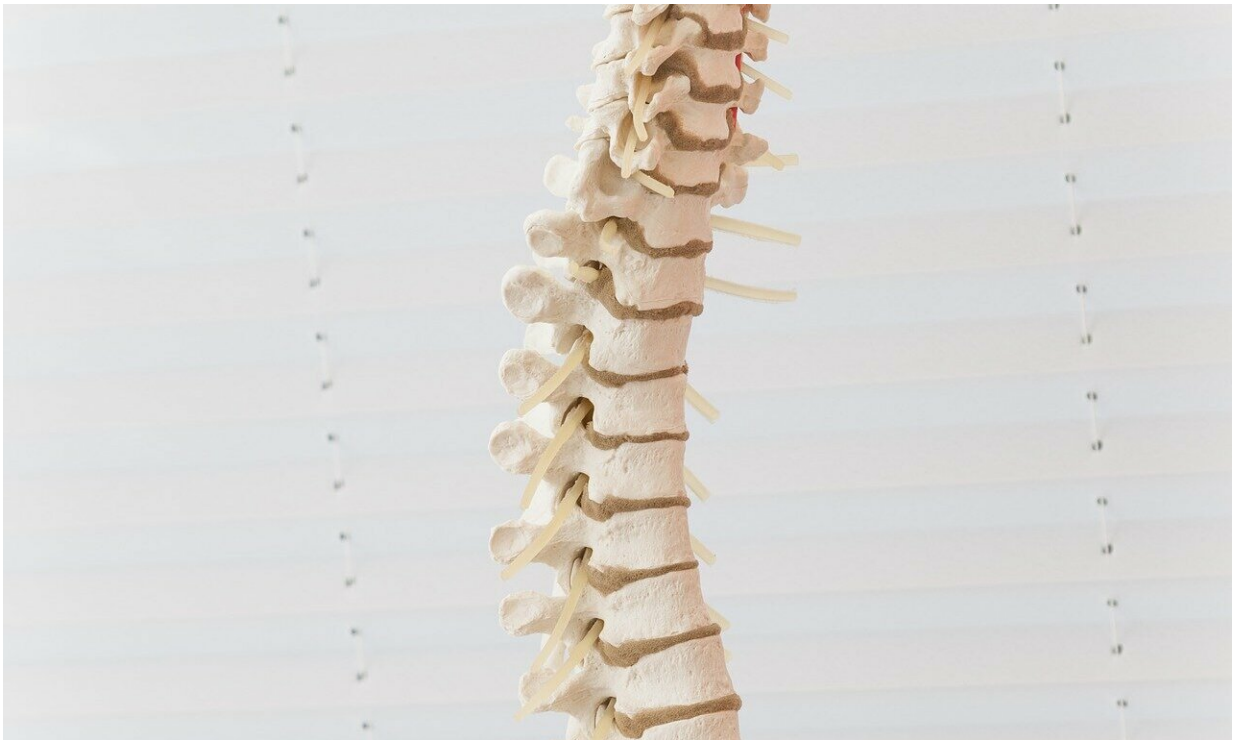


# Mayo Clinic Minute: Scoliosis is not just for kids

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Scoliosis is a condition that causes the spine to curve. It's frequently diagnosed in children—often during the growth spurt just before puberty. But it can happen in adults.

"Most of the time, we think of scoliosis as something that happens to

children or teenagers. But a lot of times, adults develop scoliosis as a part of aging," says Dr. Jeremy Fogelson, a Mayo Clinic neurosurgeon.

Arthritis and osteoporosis are often the culprits because they can weaken the spine.

"And when we're facing gravity every day, it can lead to a tilt and a curvature that can get worse over time," says Fogelson.

Symptoms in adults vary.

"Sometimes adults can be affected by scoliosis, and it can cause pain. Sometimes it can cause pinched nerves. Sometimes they can lean to the side or lean forward, and that can be bothersome," says Fogelson.

Most scoliosis cases are mild and can be treated with [physical therapy](#), weight loss and medication. Surgery is the final option if it becomes severe.

"Surgery to treat [scoliosis](#) is usually a [spinal fusion](#). Spinal fusion essentially takes vertebrae that are moving and flexible, and turns them into one longer vertebra," says Fogelson.

The fused vertebra helps straighten the spine and prevents the curve from getting worse.

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