



# SCOLIOSIS

AWARENESS WALK

23<sup>rd</sup> June, 2024



Sri Lanka Orthopaedic Association & Sri Lanka Spine Society

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## **Sri Lanka Orthopaedic Association & Sri Lanka Spine Society**

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# Scoliosis Awareness Day 2024

Not many people know that the month of June, which is popularly known as “Month of Brides” is also reserved as “the scoliosis awareness month” and the World Scoliosis Awareness Day falls on the last Saturday of the month of June. We the Sri Lanka Orthopaedic Association in collaboration with the Sri Lanka Spine Society have planned many an activity to make people aware of this not uncommon condition in this June and celebrate the National Scoliosis Awareness day on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2024. The pinnacle of the many such activities is the “Scoliosis Awareness Walk” on Sunday, the 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2024.

Before Surgery

After Surgery



## So what's the fuss all about?



You may not have heard the word scoliosis before and may be it just slipped your mind after hearing it. If we say that scoliosis is a Latin word which literally means

**“abnormal sideways curvature and twisting of spine which leads to an S shaped deformity and an unsightly hump on the back of the chest with one shoulder rising more than the other”,**

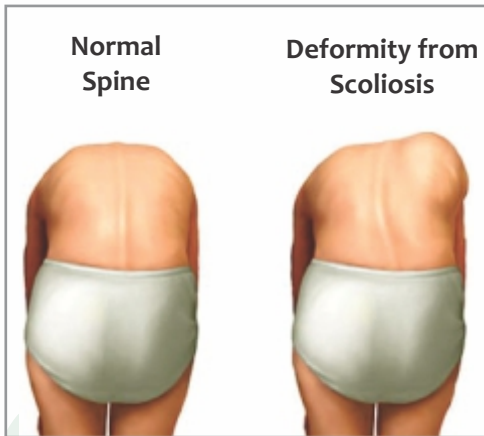
you would say “yeah, I've seen many such kids, even adults”...so that is it, the scoliosis... unfortunately we do not have a suitable Sinhala, tamil or english translation for the word scoliosis and we call it using the same Latin word, like many a disease that you know of...

## Now that you know what scoliosis is, what's this hype about?

Scoliosis is a condition which in more than 90% of the cases, affects more than 10 year old children and you would be relieved if we say that it is a successfully treatable condition, mostly without an operation, if it's detected early when the curve is not seen from outside... yeah, it's true, 90% of the scoliosis patients can be treated with what is called "bracing".



## You would then ask "how can parents/teachers diagnose scoliosis early?"



Yeah, it's easy peasy, ask the child to bend forward to touch the toes of both feet with finger tips of both hands and look at him/ her from behind. If there's no scoliosis, both sides of the back will be symmetrical.

if its a scoliosis then you would see the asymmetry of the back with a hump on one side... its called **Adam's Forward Bending Test**, which any parent/teacher can perform...

## What is a brace?

A brace is a "wearable device" made of plastic which is worn around the chest and tummy intended to control the worsening of the curvature beyond the state at which the scoliosis is diagnosed, rather than correcting the deformity...

A brace generally needs to be worn more than 18 hours a day and can be removed for essential functions which cannot be done while wearing it such as dancing, swimming, sports etc...



## *You would ask "what did you just say?, brace doesn't correct the deformity,so why wear it at all?"*

Yeah, you've heard it right, it doesn't correct the deformity and it is used to maintain the deformity as it is as long as the brace is worn until the spinal growth stops around the end of adolescence, longer the better... at the end of the successful care with a brace, the child or adult has a deformity which is not seen from outside... so the hype of this awareness is all about, the following **Ten "E" s**

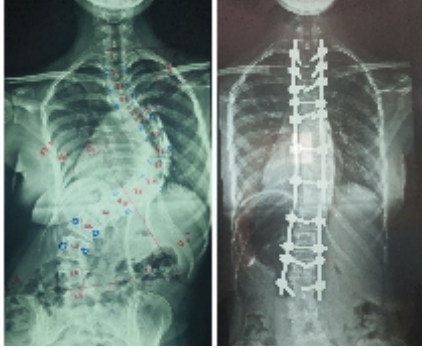
- 1. Early detection before the scoliosis is seen from outside the clothes
- 2. Early referral for bracing to prevent worsening of the deformity
- 3. Emphasizing the necessity of close and regular follow-up by an Orthopaedic Surgeon
- 4. Educating children and parents about the compliance of wearing the brace
- 5. Emphasizing the importance of aerobic conditioning exercises and lung rehabilitation exercises for the general well-being of these scoliosis children
- 6. Early detection of brace failures and rectifying the many issues as and when they occur
- 7. Empowering children and adolescents live their own life with the brace on
- 8. Embracing the care of these little souls and show them that they and their parents are not alone and they are being looked after by a big team of caring hands
- 9. Enlightening the public about their societal role of using social media, electronic and printed media for this worthy cause by making awareness groups, charities for fund raising etc
- 10. Emphasizing that successful bracing makes an adult or adolescent live a normal life without a brace

In other words, we the SLOA and SLSS want you to  
**“EMBRACE THE CARE of Scoliosis”**



## Oki doki, what if the brace fails to control the deformity?

This happens only in a minority of a 10%. But still you have supportive hands to care for you. You may need an operation to stop worsening of the scoliosis and during this operation the deformity can be corrected to a level which is barely seen from outside the clothes, not fully.



## What did you just say? “The operation cannot fully correct the deformity”

Yep, you've heard it right. These operations are major undertakings which have their own issues and therefore they are merely done to stop worsening of scoliosis and we achieve a reasonable correction of the hump and balance the shoulders without damaging the nerves which control the legs and feet.

## What if an operation is not done in these worst cases?

Then the deformity can progress at a rate of 1 degree per year even in adult life, which means in the coming 10 years, the deformity is worse by 10 degrees but still it can be corrected up until you are 30 years, sooner the better. These operations can successfully be done in Sri Lanka, at places such as National Hospital of Sri Lanka, Colombo, Lady Ridgeway Hospital for Children, Borella, Teaching Hospital Jaffna and Provincial General Hospital, Badulla by specially trained orthopaedic surgeons.

So guys & gals...

**Join us at the**

 **SCOLIOSIS**

**AWARENESS WALK**

**23<sup>rd</sup> June, 2024**



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Shine your beacon of light on the dark side of these  
**“little curvy souls”**  
and make them straight in their mind and body ...

***Embrace the societal role of holistic care of these children ...***