

# braces for scoliosis

For scoliosis patients, braces are primarily used for treating spinal curves that are more than 25 degrees or curves less than 25 degrees increasing in size. Braces can also be used to treat patients whose spines are still growing.

## Bracing facts

- A brace does not give permanent correction of the curve. At best, bracing prevents curve progression.
- Bracing is most successful in curves below 40 degrees.
- Braces prevent curve progression in 65 to 75 percent of patients.
- Braces are typically worn until the spine has finished growing.
- A brace does not prevent curve progression once the adolescent's spine has finished growing.
- To be effective, the brace should fit snugly and produce some curve correction while being worn. The brace may be uncomfortable when first worn, but that's sometimes necessary to achieve best results.
- Braces are custom-made for each patient by an orthotist.



## Types of braces

- Hard plastic braces are the most effective. Flexible braces and straps have not shown adequate levels of correction.
- Full-time braces have been the gold standard. These braces are typically worn at least 16 hours a day.
- Night-time braces, worn while sleeping, can be effective for certain curves. These braces give patients an alternative to wearing a full-time brace for 16 hours.
- Families and patients must work together on brace wear. If the brace is not worn adequately it will not be beneficial.



## Activities

- Full activities are encouraged.
- Braces should not be worn during sports and physical exercise.
- Strong core muscular strength builds bone mass, muscle mass and may help the curve appearance.
- Building strong core muscle strength and flexibility lessens the chance of back pain.