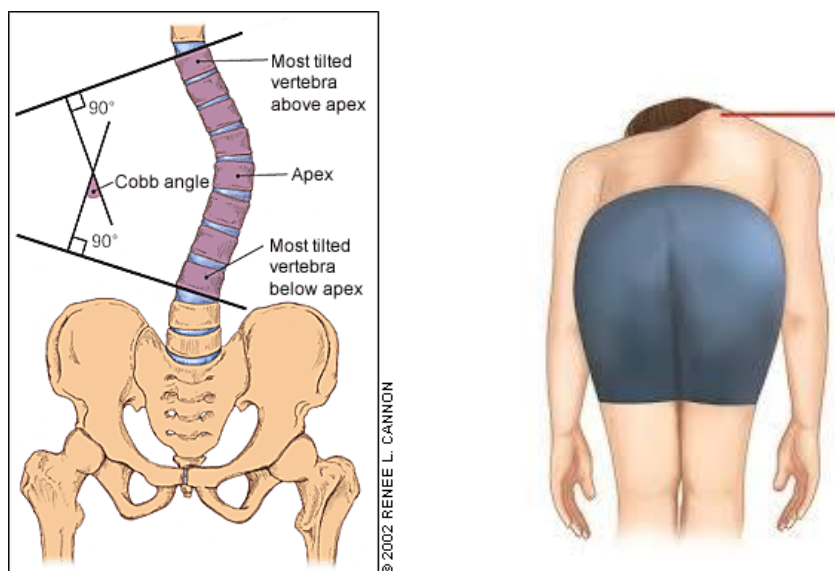




Adolescent Idiopathic Scoliosis

What is it?

Adolescent Idiopathic Scoliosis (AIS) is defined as a curvature of the spine that is greater than 10° as seen using an X-ray, in a patient that is 10 years of age or older and has no underlying cause of the curvature. Some patients are at an increased risk of the spinal curvature to increase over time. Some of the risk factors include: patients younger than 12, female gender, curves greater than 20° , and those who have an “S” shaped curve. It is difficult to know which curves may progress, however, all patients who still have bone immaturity are at risk.



What are the symptoms?

Most patients with AIS may be completely symptom free, however, a small percentage of patients may report some related back pain. Likewise, most patients will not experience breathing difficulties or weakness and can still perform everyday activities pain free and without difficulty.

How is it diagnosed?

AIS is diagnosed using physical examination in combination with imaging. The health care professional will evaluate the patient in the clinical setting, and if suspicious for scoliosis, will order X-ray imaging for further evaluation.

Treatments:

Management of AIS depends heavily on the degree of the curvature, the bone maturity, and if symptoms are present.

- For curves less than 20° , continue with observation, physical therapy, and repeat X-rays as indicated
- For curves greater than 20° , referral to specialists is indicated and bracing may be used
- For curves greater than $45-50^\circ$, referral to specialist is needed and may require surgery