



**NATIONWIDE CHILDREN'S**  
*When your child needs a hospital, everything matters.™*

## **Helping Hand™**

*Health Education for Patients and Families*

# **Sports Medicine: Kyphosis and Lordosis**

Kyphosis and lordosis refer to the natural curves of the spine in the mid-back and low back. Sometimes these curves can be larger than normal which can lead to pain. Too much kyphosis occurs when the upper back (thoracic) curves outward into a “C” shape, creating a humpback look. Too much lordosis occurs when the spine in the lower back (lumbar) curves inward, creating a reverse “C” shape or swayback look where the buttocks and stomach are more prominent.

## **Signs and symptoms**

- visible hump or curve in the upper or lower back
- pain in the mid or low back
- tight hamstring muscles
- difference in shoulder height and forward position
- head bends forward compared to the rest of the body

## **Increased risk**

- poor posture
- family history of the condition

## **Treatment**

- Medicine
  - Anti-inflammatory medicines, such as ibuprofen (Motrin® or Advil®) or naproxen (Aleve®) may be recommended. Take these as directed by your health care provider.
  - Other minor pain relievers, such as acetaminophen (Tylenol®)
- Use of cold and heat
  - Cold should be applied for 10 to 15 minutes every 2 to 3 hours for swelling and after any activity that makes symptoms worse. Use ice packs or an ice massage.

- Heat may be used before stretching and strengthening activities prescribed by your health care provider or athletic trainer. Use a heat pack or warm soak. Apply for 10 to 15 minutes.
- Exercises
  - Exercises to improve range of motion, strength and flexibility may be recommended. These can be done at home but often a referral to a physical therapist or athletic trainer may be prescribed by your health care provider.
- Surgery and Bracing
  - Bracing may be helpful in some cases to decrease pain. In more severe cases that do not get better with bracing or rehab exercises, surgery may be needed.

## How to prevent

- Patients need to be followed over time to make sure curves are not worsening.
- Build strong bones with a healthy diet that includes plenty of calcium and vitamin D.
- Maintain correct posture, conditioning, flexibility, core, back muscle strength and endurance.

## When to call the health care provider

Call your health care provider or the **Sports Medicine team** at **(614) 355-6000** if:

- symptoms get worse after 2 to 4 weeks, even with treatment
- you have loss of bowel or bladder function
- new, unexplained symptoms develop

To schedule an appointment with Sports Medicine, visit  
[NationwideChildrens.org/SportsMedicineScheduling](https://NationwideChildrens.org/SportsMedicineScheduling)  
 or scan this code with your camera phone.

