

FIRST DNA TEST HELPS PREDICT IF MILD SCOLIOSIS WILL BECOME SEVERE

New SCOLISCORE™ AIS Prognostic Test Now Available in Chicago Area May Help Doctors Reduce Need for Repeated X-Rays, Bracing in Low Risk Patients

CHICAGO – September 21, 2010 – When sixth-grader Julia Deferville, 11, was diagnosed with mild adolescent idiopathic scoliosis (AIS), an abnormal curvature of the spine, she and her family feared what the future might hold if her curve became worse.

“I thought I would become all hunched over, wouldn’t be able to play any sports, and that kids would make fun of me,” said Julia, who enjoys playing basketball and volleyball, bike riding with her family and helping her dad with yard work at their Lake Villa home.

Julia’s mom had other concerns. “It was the fear of the unknown,” said Joyce Deferville, who was the first to notice a change in her daughter’s posture. “Would she need to wear a brace? Would she need surgery? How long would it be before we knew? How many x-rays over how long a period would she need to take?”

Those questions were answered last March when Julia became one of the first patients in Chicago to take the SCOLISCORE™ AIS Prognostic Test, a new DNA test that helps doctors accurately predict whether or not children diagnosed with mild scoliosis will progress to severe scoliosis, a potentially painful and debilitating condition that could require surgery.

A sample of a patient’s saliva is sent to a laboratory for DNA analysis which yields a numerical score between 1 and 200 that tells doctors whether patients are at a low (less than 50), intermediate (51-180) or high risk (181 to 200) for developing a severe curve (greater than 40 degrees). Spine surgery is generally recommended for curves of 45 degrees or more.1 Julia, who was involved in the early testing phase of the genetic test, had a SCOLISCORE of three which indicated that she has a 99 percent probability that she will not experience progression to a severe curve.2

“When combined with existing radiographic and clinical information, the SCOLISCORE Test provides a very accurate picture of the risk or progression, which helps personalize the monitoring and treatment of scoliosis patients,” said Steven Mardjetko, MD, an orthopedic surgeon and scoliosis specialist at the Illinois Bone and Joint Institute in Morton Grove.

Since most children will fall into the low risk category Julia’s doctor, Andrea S. Kramer, MD, a pediatric orthopedic surgeon also at the Illinois Bone and Joint Institute, believes the SCOLISCORE Test will help reduce the need for repeated spinal x-rays, frequent doctor visits and even bracing for thousands of patients throughout the country.

Children with mild scoliosis (curves of 25 degrees or less) are generally monitored for possible progression until they stop growing. This typically means x-rays and physical examinations every four to six months over a period of several years.

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In some cases, children wear a brace in an attempt to slow or stop possible curve progression. According to a published report, children with scoliosis receive an average of 29 spinal x-rays over a nine-year period and seven to 10 percent of initially diagnosed patients are prescribed a brace.3 Studies also have shown that adolescents repeatedly exposed to diagnostic radiation have a higher incidence of thyroid, breast and blood cancers later in life.4 “It really gives me peace of mind to know that Julia’s chances of developing a severe curve are quite low and that her doctor recommended at this time she doesn’t need to get so many x-rays or wear a brace,” Joyce said.

The Science Behind the Test

Scoliosis affects about 7 million people, mostly children;5 and though suspected for many years, recent studies have demonstrated a strong genetic component to AIS. Building on this knowledge, researchers reviewed the medical records and DNA samples of more than 10,000 scoliosis patients and their family members and discovered that scoliosis patients have two kinds of genetic markers – one that may predispose them to developing severe scoliosis and another that may protect them from severe curve progression.

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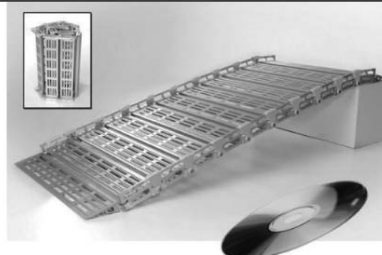
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This led to the development of the SCOLISCORE Test. The SCOLISCORE Test is the first commercially available genetic test for a spinal deformity and is intended for Caucasian children between age 9 and 13 diagnosed with mild AIS (10°-25° Cobb Angle). The SCOLISCORE Test helps predict the risk of progression to a more severe curve once it is diagnosed. It does not predict an individual’s susceptibility to inherit the condition, or the final outcome of a patient’s progression.

For more information or to find a health care professional who offers the SCOLISCORE Test, visit www.scoliscore.com. The SCOLISCORE Test is available at more than 100 spine centers in the U.S.

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The healing power of John of God's Crystals is one of the items mention in the December issue of O Magazine. Check out this link: <http://www.oprah.com/spirit/Spiritual-Healer-John-of-God-Susan-Casey/1>.

As with all energetic techniques the effect varies with each individual and each session. Some common experiences:

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