



# Custom Scoliosis Brace



*At Orthokids, we make lots of Scoliosis braces and have been doing so for over 20 years. You will always be seen by an experienced Paediatric Orthotist. The person who assesses your scoliosis; designs, fits and reviews your brace as well.*

## *Your first appointment*

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Although this can be a difficult and sometimes scary part of your life, we attempt to make it as stress free as possible.

On the day of your appointment you will meet your Orthotist. An Orthotist is someone who has a university degree in design, fabrication and fitting of scoliosis braces.

We provide the best, state-of-the-art, orthotic management of scoliosis in Melbourne. Our orthotist will meet with you to discuss the process, talk about what to expect, show you a brace and help you design your own brace. We will evaluate your x-rays and design the most clinically effective brace possible.

It is a good idea to wear your bathers to this appointment. We use a special casting frame to take a plaster mould of your body. The plaster extends from just below your neck to down past your hips. It takes around 5 to 10 minutes for the plaster to set before we remove it.

We now have the shape of your body, which allows us to make your brace as comfortable and effective as possible. There are many different colour choices for your brace.



## *Your brace fitting appointment*

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On this day, your brace will be fitted and you will take it home. It is a good idea to have a close-fitting singlet or T-shirt to wear under the brace. We have [Torso Interface body socks](#) available to purchase. These body socks are specifically designed for use with scoliosis braces.

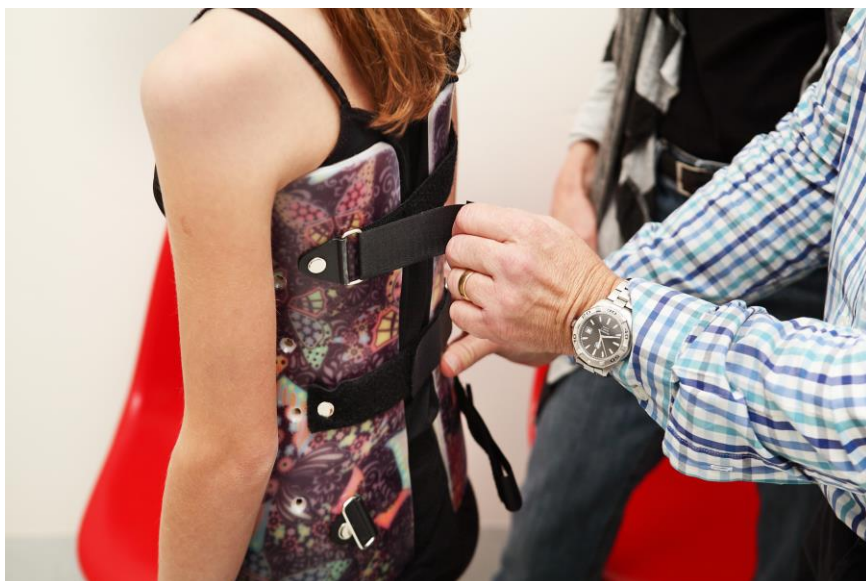
The main objective of your brace is to prevent progression of your scoliosis.

The brace has been custom-made to fit your body and control your specific curve. It acts by pushing against both the side to side curve and the rotation component of the curve.



The first time you try your new brace on, it will feel really strange! Your brace will be trimmed so that you are as comfortable as possible whilst maintaining the proper function of the brace. You will take the brace home on this day; however you don't wear it home in the car, as sitting for prolonged periods in the early stages can be uncomfortable.

Your brace has to be worn very firmly, which can make it feel quite restrictive. Simple tasks such as sitting cross-legged or bending over to pick something off the floor can seem almost impossible.



As difficult as it seems when first fitted with the brace, you will learn to do things differently and your body will learn to accommodate these changes.

It normally takes around 3 to 4 weeks before you are wearing the brace full-time. Most people become accustomed to wearing their brace at night (sleeping) first.

On the day of brace fitting, you should try wearing the brace at home for a couple of hours and then to bed at night. If you cannot get to sleep in the brace, remove it and try again the following night.

If you wake up in the middle of the night and can't get back to sleep, take your brace off and try again the following day.

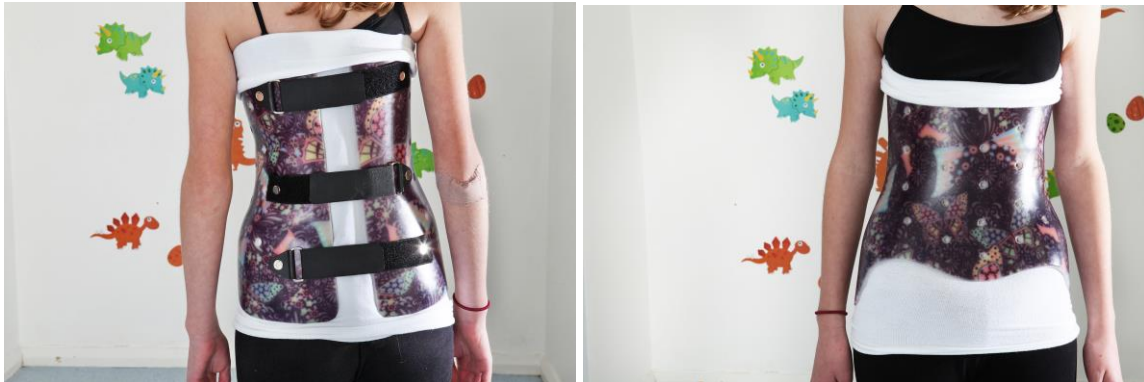
Gradually increasing wear time before and after school is the next step. Wearing the brace to school is the final stage in the process of getting used to the brace. Your aim is to wear the brace 23 hours per day.

These are very general guidelines as every individual case is different. Your Orthotist will give you some tips for getting through this initial stage.

A lot of people find our [scoliosis wearing chart](#) helpful to give you a visual reference on how many hours per day you are wearing the brace.

The time that you spend out of the brace should be for bathing and any activities that can't be done in the brace. If the brace has to be removed for sporting activities then it should be removed just before the activity and put back on immediately after. Keep in mind that many of our patients continue to wear their brace during sporting activities.

Swimming or pilates are activities that of our patients take part in to keep stomach and back (core) muscles toned.



If you wear the brace well for the majority of the time it is okay to have the brace off for special occasions.

One of the sayings we have is “the brace should become part of your life, not change it completely”. Keep in mind, the more you wear the brace the more effective it will be.

## *Common Problems*

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It is quite natural for a new brace wearer's back to feel a little tired and uncomfortable while they are increasing their wear-time. This is quite understandable, as the back is being pushed in the opposite direction to which it is curving.

This discomfort should subside within the first couple of weeks. If it persists or is unbearable please contact us.

It is also quite common to develop a heat rash underneath the brace. In such cases the body should be kept dry by using a Heat Rash Powder (available from your pharmacist) after bathing. The heat rash should subside in the first couple of weeks as the body grows accustomed to it. This is more common over the summer months.

If you develop uncomfortable red marks over bony areas, such as your hips, and they do not disappear after 1 hour of removing the brace, please contact us.

## *Cleaning*

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As the brace is worn for long periods of time and is in close contact with your body, it requires regular cleaning.

The brace should be cleaned daily with warm water and a mild soap or suitable body wipes. This prevents any chance of skin irritations developing. The foam lining will not soak up any water, and can be dried with a towel.

Over summer it may be necessary for you to have 2 or 3 body sock changes to keep comfortable throughout the day.

## *Follow up appointments*

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A review appointment will be made for 3 to 4 weeks after the initial fitting of your brace. If at any stage you are uncomfortable or concerned about the fit of the brace please contact us immediately.

At your first follow up appointment you should bring your wearing chart along so that your Orthotist can see how much time you have been wearing your brace. This appointment is a good opportunity to discuss any concerns you have about any sore spots or activities you are having trouble with. Keep in mind; you are still in the early stages of getting used to your new brace, so it's really common to have a few concerns. Our Orthotists are able to answer any queries you may have, so write some questions down if you like.

Regular reviews are necessary every 2-3 months. This will allow us to check that the brace is fitting correctly and make any necessary adjustments to accommodate growth. We work closely with all members of the team treating your scoliosis.

An appointment should also be made with your Orthopaedic Surgeon for approximately 3 months after the brace has been fitted. (This will vary from surgeon to surgeon). During this appointment the surgeon will check the brace and may schedule an x-ray review.

## *Getting on with life*

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On average, it takes around 3 months to start feeling “normal’ whilst wearing your brace. Around this time, most people are starting to feel comfortable in the brace and life has returned to something resembling your pre brace experience. It is really important to continue wearing your brace for as many hours as possible from this point on. You have a small window of opportunity to control your Scoliosis and although we believe we can make a really good brace for you – in the end it’s up to you to wear your brace and get the best results you possibly can.

There are many options for support during this difficult time. If you are struggling at any stage with any aspect of wearing your brace, please contact us immediately.

For more information

<http://www.srs.org/>

<http://www.curvygirlsscoliosis.com/#!australia/c191x>

<http://www.scoliosisjournal.com/>



## *Made in Melbourne*

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Our Custom Scoliosis Braces are designed and manufactured at our facility in Surrey Hills, Melbourne. This allows us to provide a premium brace which can be fine-tuned throughout the treatment process to provide maximum control of your Scoliosis.

Some companies will send a cast or scan of your child’s body to an overseas manufacturer and hope the finished product fits well, as they are unable to make any adjustments to the brace at their clinic. In our opinion, this loss of control during the design and manufacturing process could result in a substandard outcome in the treatment of your scoliosis.



## *Comfort and Function Guarantee*

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We guarantee our braces will be comfortable to wear, whilst performing the intended clinical function.

We pride ourselves on being able to design, manufacture and fit the most comfortable, but clinically effective orthoses and braces in Melbourne.

Our reputation for achieving excellent outcomes for our patients is well known within the medical, allied health and general community.

It is often a fine balance between comfort and function. We are committed to achieving this balance.

The cost of your treatment includes all review appointments required for the life of each orthosis/ brace.