

THE BEST STRETCHES FOR SCOLIOSIS

THESE **EXERCISES** WILL
MAKE YOUR BRACE
MORE COMFORTABLE



HELLO & WELCOME,

When you or your child has been diagnosed with scoliosis, you might be nervous about treatments, braces, and overall maintenance of the condition.

But, don't worry, we are here to help!

One of the best ways to care for yourself is to gently stretch and exercise the affected parts of your body. This will help relieve some of the issues you face, slow down further curvatures, and increase your comfort levels when wearing a brace.

The stretches you should do greatly depend on the type of scoliosis you're dealing with. For example, people with lumbar scoliosis need to focus on exercising their lower back, whereas those with thoracic scoliosis should concentrate on exercising their shoulders.

Within this guide, we will share some of the most helpful stretches for people with scoliosis. However, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to book a consultation with us so that we can take you through each of the stretches that are right for you and your specific diagnosis.

Remember, combining back braces with stretching can be some of the most effective ways to slow further curvatures in the spine and speed up the success rate of your current care plan.

**So, no time to waste.
Let's get straight to it.**

THE PELVIC TILT

Regularly practicing a pelvic tilt will help stretch all the muscles in your hips and lower back. This is great for relieving any tightness and loosening the muscles before placing **your brace** on your body.



HERE'S HOW TO DO IT.

- 1** Lay on your back.
- Place your **feet flat on the floor** with your **knees bent**.
- Brace your core muscles - tightening them as you **flatten your back towards the floor and gently move them upwards again**.
- 4** Hold this position for about 5 seconds.
- 5** Release.
- 6** Repeat 10 times.
- 7** Do this for **two sets** to get maximum relief.

Remember, don't forget to breathe normally throughout this stretch. This shouldn't cause too much discomfort as it primarily stretches the muscles. If you're overexerting your body, make smaller, gentler movements - these will be equally impactfully and will work to increase your range of motion with time.

ARM & LEG STRETCHES

With this stretch, you are working to strengthen and release muscles in both your back and in your limbs.



HERE'S HOW TO DO IT.

- 1** Lay on your belly and place your forehead on the ground.
- 2** Stretch your arms out over your head. Place your palms flat on the ground.
- 3** Straighten your legs flat on the ground too.
- 4** Raise your left arm off the ground and hold for two full breaths. Lower your arm back down.
- 5** Repeat this with your right arm.
- 6** Then, move to your left leg and finally onto your right leg.
- 7** Continue moving around your body focusing on each individual limb until you've repeated it for about 15 times.

This movement should help you to feel a stretch and flex across your back and the limb you're working on at that moment. It's a gentle way to work your muscles while also stretching them out.



CHILD'S POSE

Yoga stretches are particularly helpful for scoliosis patients. The child's pose is easy to do and a great all over body release.

HERE'S HOW TO DO IT.

1

Place your **hands** and knees on the ground.

2

Spread your knees as wide as comfortable while maintaining contact between your two big toes.

3

Lower your belly to rest between your thighs, further lowering your forehead to reach the ground. (If you cannot reach the ground, you can also rest your forehead on two stacked fists, or a comfortable block)

4

If you're not resting your forehead on your hands, you can choose to **stretch your arms** out on the floor, with your palms facing downwards.



5

For an **extra shoulder release**, you can face your palms upwards.

6

Last **alteration** could be bringing your hands and resting them beside your body in the direction of your thighs.

7

Hold this overall stretch for **as long as is comfortable**.

8

Focus on your **breath** as you hold this position.

9

You can also **rock certain parts of your body** to increase some of the stretch. However, it's important to find the right balance for you.

CAT CAMEL

This is another of our favorite yoga poses. This will help to add an extra layer of flexibility to your spine, releasing any tensions from building within.

HERE'S HOW TO DO IT.

- 1** Place your **hands and your knees on the floor**. Keep your back level and stable between the two.
- 2** Make sure your head and neck are **comfortable**.
- 3** **Breathe** deep.
- 4** Draw your **core muscles** in and up.
- 5** **Arch your back** upwards.
- 6** As you **exhale**, release your muscles and **dropping back** to the stable, straight position.
- 7** As your belly falls, **lift your head towards the ceiling** to elongate the stretch.
- 8** Complete **two sets** of 10 for full release.



CHEST AND SHOULDERS STRETCH

This one is very straightforward to complete and can help to release the tension building in your upper back, arms and shoulders.



HERE'S HOW TO DO IT.

- 1** In a **seated or standing** position, place your arms in front of you.
- 2** **Lock your fingers** together.
- 3** Start to **raise** your clasped hands towards the sky.
- 4** **Stretch** it for as long as possible.
- 5** **Unlock** your fingers and relax.
- 6** Next, place your **arms behind your back**.
- 7** **Lock your fingers** together.
- 8** Start to raise your clasped hands upwards **behind your back**.
- 9** This will reach your **shoulder blades** into your back pocket, releasing your chest muscles.
- 10** Stretch for as long as **comfortable**.
- 11** And **release**.
- 12** **Repeat** a couple times on both sides, until you can feel the effects on your chest, shoulders, arms and upper back muscles.

SIDE RELIEF

The **latissimus dorsi** is the largest muscle in the upper body. When you have **thoracic scoliosis**, this muscle is directly affected. If you have **lumbar scoliosis**, you will have back tension that extends into this largest muscle. With this stretch, we work to release the tension in this part of the body.

HERE'S HOW TO DO IT.

- 1** **Stand tall**, in great posture.
- 2** Bring your feet to **shoulder-width** apart.
- 3** Ever so slightly **bend your knees**.
- 4** **Reach your hands over your head**.
- 5** **Grab your right wrist** with your left hand.
- 6** **Bend your body to your right side**, until you feel a stretch all along the left side of your body.
- 7** **Hold**. Breathing in and out for two full breaths.
- 8** **Return** to the original stance.
- 9** **Repeat** by grabbing your left wrist with your right hand.
- 10** Hold and repeat about **10 times** on both sides.



With this move, you should feel the muscles all along your side elongate and release.

CORE FOCUS

The stronger your core muscles, the less pressure on your back to support the entire trunk of your body.

Furthermore, when you have a strong core, you can maintain better posture for longer.

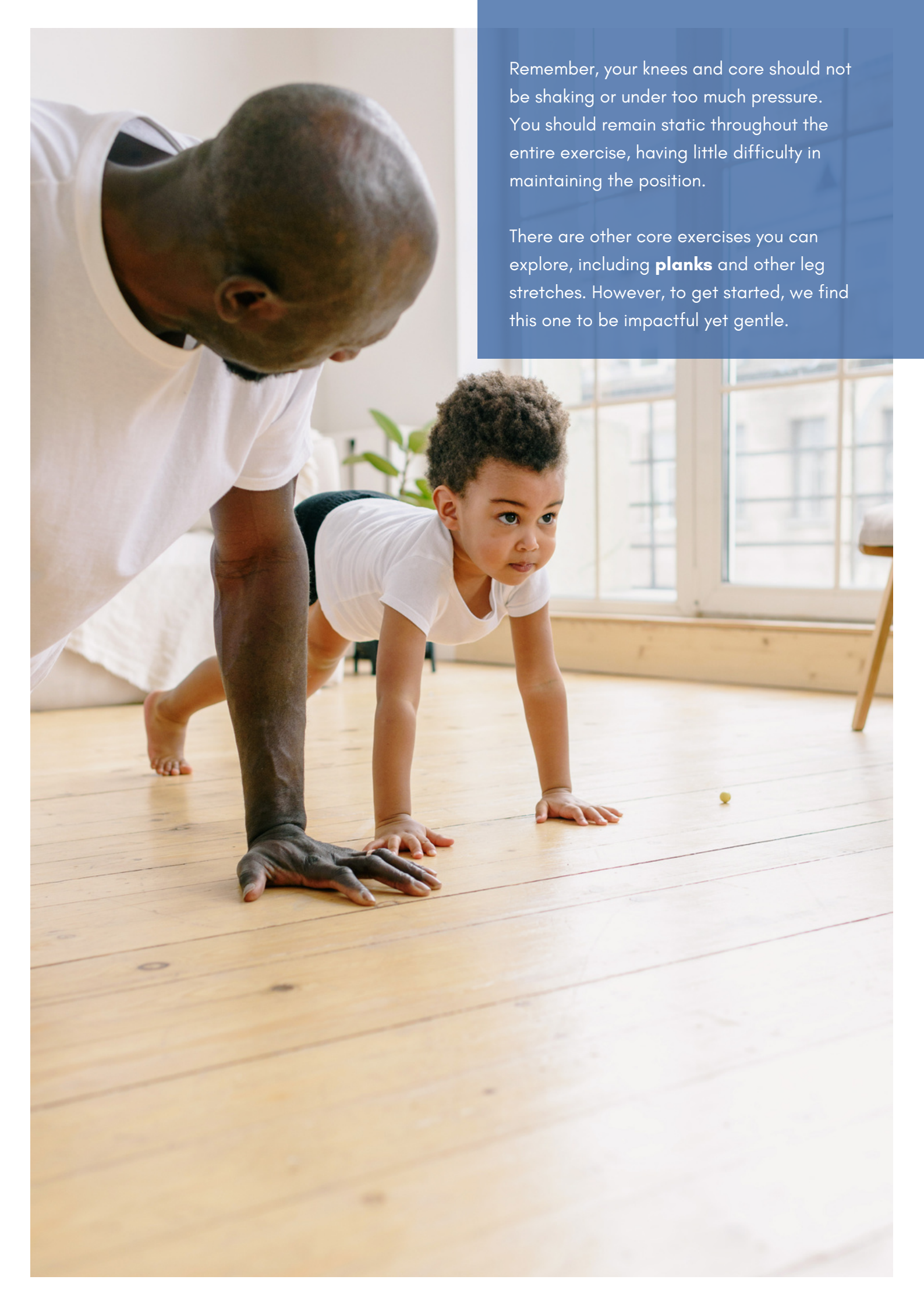
There are multiple exercises and stretches you can do to help maintain your core muscles.

THE ABDOMINAL PRESS

HERE'S HOW TO DO IT.

- 1 Lay on your back.**
- Place your **feet flat on the ground** with your knees bent.
- Make sure your back is **relaxed** and without tension.
- Raise both your legs** off of the floor, bringing them to a natural, 90-degree angle. You can also do each leg by itself.
- Place both your hands on each knee**, gently pushing downwards. This will create tension in your core, as your body engages with the pressure between your hands on your knees.
- Your knees should move down, they should remain in a **solid position**, with gentle yet consistent tension.
- Hold** this pose for around three breaths.
- Relax and **release**.
- Repeat** for a further 10 repetitions.



A photograph showing a man and a young child in a plank position on a light-colored wooden floor. The man, on the left, is leaning forward with his hands on the floor, supporting the child. The child, on the right, is also in a plank position, looking towards the camera. The background features a large window with a view of a city street and a potted plant. A blue text box is overlaid on the top right of the image.

Remember, your knees and core should not be shaking or under too much pressure. You should remain static throughout the entire exercise, having little difficulty in maintaining the position.

There are other core exercises you can explore, including **planks** and other leg stretches. However, to get started, we find this one to be impactful yet gentle.

AND, THAT'S IT!

Committing to stretches and gentle exercises can greatly improve your comfort when wearing your brace, while also slowing further curvatures in your spine.

If you have any questions about these stretches, do not hesitate to contact us directly.

We would be happy to schedule you in for a consultation, providing you with recommendations on the best stretches for your particular brace and care plan.

**REQUEST AN APPOINTMENT WITH US
TODAY TO FIND OUT MORE:**

CONTACT NOW

Until then, keep stretching and gently moving your body. It will make a world of difference to your comfort and progress!

See you at our practice,

The Horton's Team





Horton's Orthotics & Prosthetics

Providing a Lifetime of Support