

# Shriners Children's Highlights Pioneering Work of Dr. Amer Samdani During National Scoliosis Awareness Month

*Shriners Children's is highlighting the work of its own Amer Samdani, M.D., and his help in developing a new scoliosis treatment method.*

PHILADELPHIA, PA., UNITED STATES, June 19, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As part of [Scoliosis Awareness Month](#) in June, [Shriners Children's](#) is highlighting the work of its own Amer Samdani, M.D., and his help in developing a new scoliosis treatment method that is now utilized by thousands of pediatric patients each year. Scoliosis is a condition where the spine curves to make a C-shape or S-shape. More than 100,000 children in the U.S. are diagnosed with the condition each year.



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Dr. Samdani played an instrumental role in helping to develop a new procedure known as Vertebral Body Tethering (VBT) which is an innovative alternative to traditional spinal fusion surgery. Since 2011, Dr. Samdani has offered the procedure at Shriners Children's Philadelphia for patients who meet specific criteria as an alternative to spinal fusion surgery. The treatment has been utilized at Shriners Children's locations throughout the country including Chicago, Southern California, Northern California, Portland and Philadelphia.

"At Shriners Children's, we believe our job isn't just to provide our current patients with the best care, but find innovative ways to give them more options," said Dr. Samdani. "The traditional surgery for scoliosis can work great for some scoliosis patients, but one disadvantage is that patients can lose some of their mobility which can cause back problems later in life or the need for another surgery eventually. That motivated us to develop VBT, which uses a rope instead of rods to help prevent disc deterioration later in life. It's exciting to be where we are now and see data coming in that shows us this treatment method is not only effective but is truly making a difference in the lives of children and hopefully eliminating the need for additional spinal



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*Amer Samdani, M.D.,*

surgeries down the road."

During the VBT procedure, a surgeon attaches metal anchors to the vertebrae where the spine curves and tethers to the anchors and places it under tension. Over time, as a child grows, the tether slows the growth on the curved side. An ideal candidate for VBT is a patient who has a less than 65-degree curve in their lumbar spine and they have some more growing to do. Dr. Samdani has personally performed nearly 400 VBT procedures so far

and the hospital system as a whole has performed over 800 VBT surgeries utilizing this technology.

Several recent research studies have highlighted the successful outcomes of VBT patients. According to a study published in the Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery 2022, patients who underwent VBT experienced significantly less loss of motion in the lumbar spine two years post-procedure than patients who had traditional scoliosis surgery.

"At Shriners Children's, our goal is to provide the kind of care that will set that child up for a healthy and successful future," said Dr. Samdani. "After VBT, we see patients go back to doing activities like gymnastics, basketball or soccer quicker and at higher levels than if they had the traditional fusion treatment. Knowing that you've been able to alter a patient's life is wonderful, especially knowing that we're able to provide this care to children regardless of a family's ability to pay."

Scoliosis is most commonly diagnosed between 10-15 years of age during periods of rapid growth. Pediatric medical experts recommend females be screened at least twice at ages 10 and 12 and males at ages 13 or 14.

Some additional indicators to watch for in a child who has scoliosis are:

- Clothes do not fit correctly.
- One shoulder may appear higher than the other
- One shoulder blade may stick out further than the other
- One hip may appear higher or stick out more than the other
- Their head is not properly centered over their body
- When bending from the waist, the ribs on one side are higher
- Their waistline may appear flat on one side

About Shriners Children's

Shriners Children's improves the lives of children by providing pediatric specialty care, conducting innovative research, and offering outstanding education programs for medical professionals. Children with orthopedic conditions, burns, spinal cord injuries, and cleft lip and

palate are eligible for care, regardless of the families' ability to pay, and receive all care and services in a compassionate, family-centered environment. For more information, please visit [shrinerschildrens.org](http://shrinerschildrens.org).

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