



Mental Impacts of Idiopathic Scoliosis

Student-Led Research Study



Researcher: Phillip Pazdur

August 2022

DISCLAIMER: The contents of this resource including without limitation, all data, information, text, graphics, links, and other materials are meant to be used for informational purposes only. This resource is not a substitute for medical advice. Users of the resource should consult and follow their healthcare professional before making any health, medical, or other decisions based upon the information contained herein.

Abstract

Living with scoliosis is not just a physical journey, but a mental one. Feelings of anxiety, fear, and depression are widely shared among scoliosis patients from the point of diagnosis through their journey. Issues of self-image cloud the minds of scoliosis patients, while only 1 in 2 patients feel like they have someone to open up to about their emotions due to the difficulty of finding emotional support resources. The goal of the study is to shed light to the mental impacts scoliosis can have on a patient, and the importance of emotional support resources to help scoliosis warriors get through their journey.

Demographics

Age Diagnosed With Scoliosis

73%

6-13 Years Old

19%

14-18 Years Old

8%

0-5 Years Old

Treatment Option

50%

Bracing

42%

Surgery

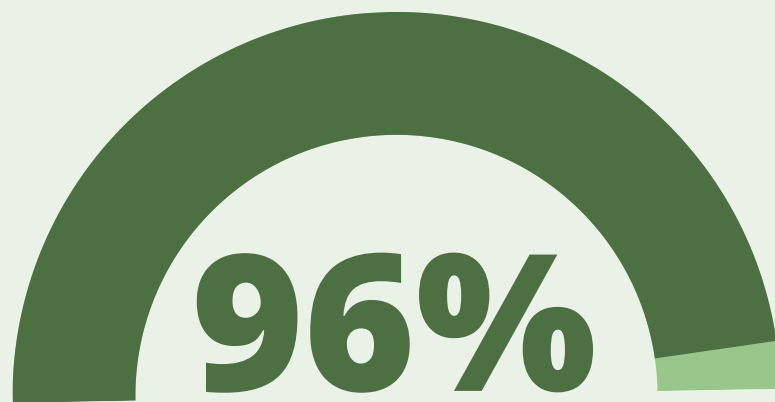
35%

Physical
Therapy

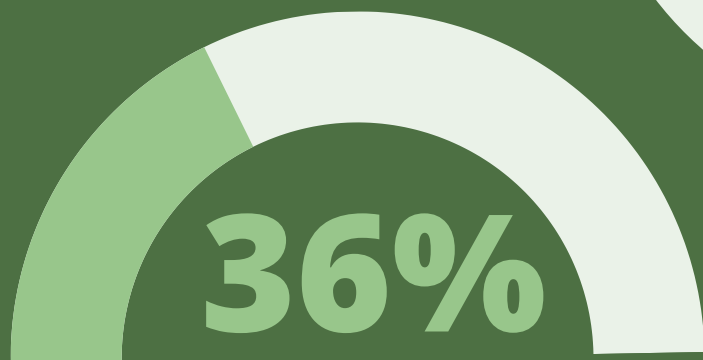
4%

Other

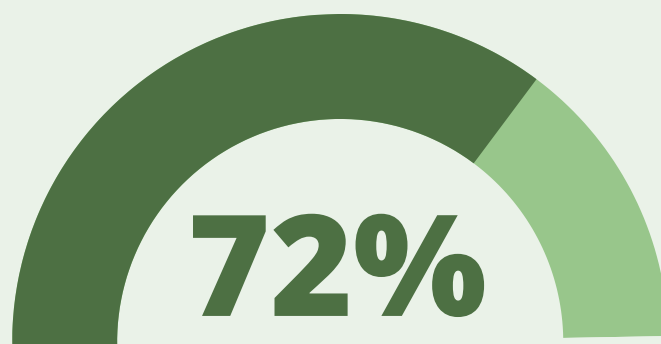
After Being Diagnosed With Scoliosis...



felt anxious about their treatment journey.



families were financially worried about treatment.



feared being unable to participate in normal activities due to scoliosis.

Emotions and the Scoliosis Journey



88%

had issues with their *self-image* due to scoliosis.



80%

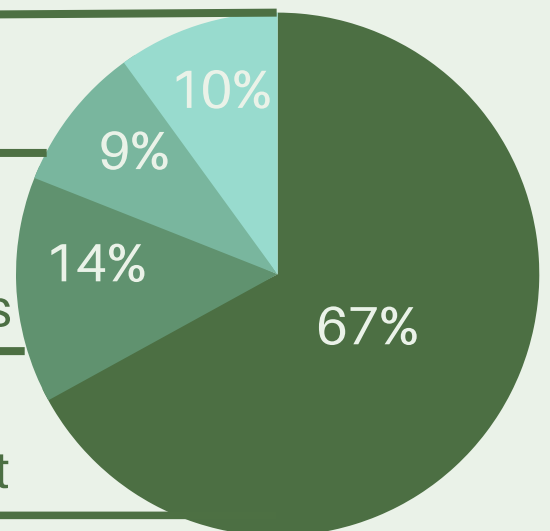
felt *depressed* or *lonely* during certain points of the scoliosis journey.

End of Treatment

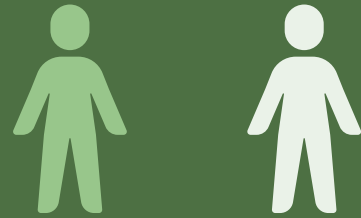
First Month Post
Diagnosis

Time of Diagnosis

During Treatment

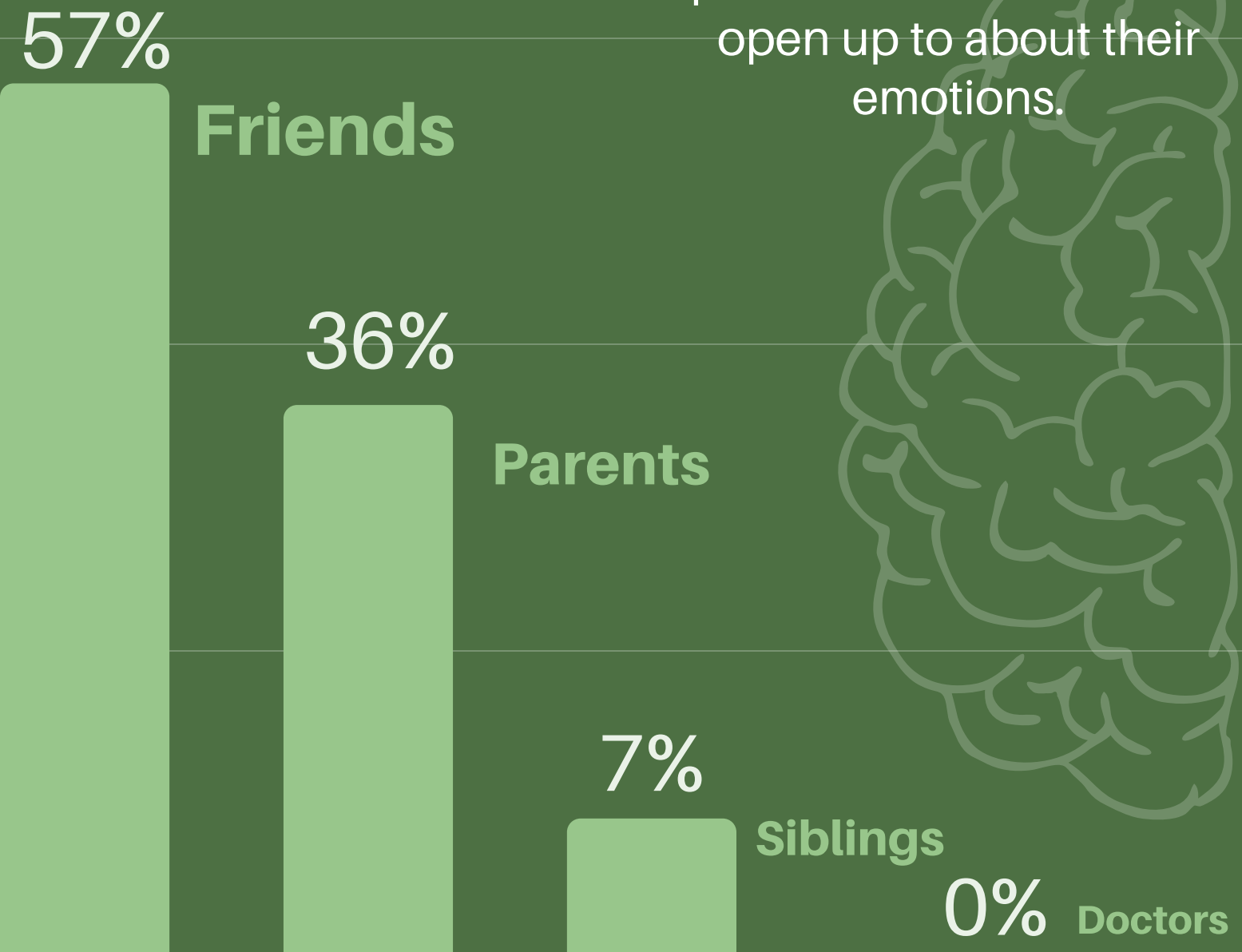


Opening Up About Mental Health



1 in 2

patients had someone to
open up to about their
emotions.



Patients Felt Able to Open Up to...

From One Scoliosis Warrior to Another...

"Keep pushing through because it's all worth it in the end."

"To my fellow scoliosis warriors, we can be happy despite the pain and body image issues. We don't need to seek for people's validation to know that we're enough. I hope we all will eventually make peace with our body. We've got this "

"You are never alone and your feelings are valid! Educate people about scoliosis and the treatment(s) you had or are receiving, so you feel like you have the emotional support you need "

"It's really tough but you will make it through, talk. Don't keep things bottled up and try to look at the positives each day as it can be a dark time."

"Be comfortable with your body. Altering it, can not alter our thoughts! I assumed after surgery I'd be beautiful, but I feel the same as before. Once my mindset was altered I felt confident in my skin. I have days where I don't feel pretty but younger me wouldn't believe who we turned into on our journey! It's hard to remember that."

"Reach out and talk to others, find out about their journey and what they can do now post-treatment, often it might be surprising that surgery doesn't mean the end of activities and there's still loss you can achieve post-op."

"It's a tough journey but it makes you stronger."

"Keep a check on your curve. Keep doing your physiotherapy. It's okay to take painkillers to manage the pain, but always look for long term options, like physiotherapy/ sport massages."

"Now that mental health is recognized seek support from your GP for help. As you get older you'll need someone to talk to as your body changes. Try to find out about your whole body during diagnosis so that YOU know your body inside out."

"Just remember you are strong no matter what anyone says."

"Keep going you're stronger than you know."