

SPINA BIFIDA CLINIC at Arnold Palmer Hospital for Children

What is Spina Bifida?

Spina Bifida is a congenital disorder diagnosed in utero. The child is born with a lumbar defect and spinal fluid escapes from this defect. Associated findings are hydrocephalus (too much water on the brain) and a Chiari malformation (crowding of the back part of the brain known as the cerebellum).

We are very proud of our Spina Bifida multidisciplinary program, the ONLY one of its kind in Central Florida. The team includes nursing coordinators, neurosurgery, urology, orthopedic surgery, physical and occupational therapy, gastroenterologists, and pulmonary specialists. Please call (321) 841 1664 for more information.

What are the treatment options available?

Some patients with spina bifida may be candidates for in utero closure at select centers. Ask your maternal fetal medicine doctor or neurosurgeon.

The defect will be closed soon after birth and the child may need a shunt or tube placed to drain excess spinal fluid (the ventriculoperitoneal shunt). In rare cases, the crowded back part of the brain (Chiari) may need surgical decompression. Orthopedic and urologic specialists will evaluate the patient and offer further recommendations.

