

Flexicurve – protocol

The measure explained:

The Flexicurve ruler allows us to measure the curves of your spine. The flexicurve is a strip of flexible metal covered in plastic. I will place it at the top of your back then gently bend it so it reflects the shape of your backbone. I will then trace the curve onto graph paper.

Setting: Physiotherapy cubicle

Equipment required:

1 Gown	1 Flexicurve	10 x10 gridded Graph paper
skin/ make-up pencil	Wipes	Ruler – mm markings
Pencil	Chair	plinth

Method:

1. First examine the spine and mark relevant landmarks of C7 and L1 – see Landmark identification protocol.
2. Start with the person in sitting with shoes off. Show the person the flexicurve and talk them through the procedure. Demonstrate if needed.

Explain: *“I want you to stand in your usual best posture; resting your hands lightly on the chair or table in front. Look straight ahead.*

I will place the flexicurve on your spine and gently press to mould it to the curves of your spine. Once this is done I will ask you to take your hands away from the support and to stand in your ‘usual best posture’. I will then check and make any final adjustments.

If at any point you need to rest please say and you can sit down.

We will do this three times and you can sit and have a rest between each measure.

3. Ask the person to stand and place the top of the flexicurve with the flat part against the spine on the C7 spinous process (marked) and mould the flexi-curve along the contour of the spine to L1 spinous process (marked) to provide a replica of the spinal shape.
 - Make sure there is no gap between the flexicurve and the participant.
 - Mark the location of L1 on the flexicurve with make-up pencil.



4. Ask the person to sit. They need to relax for at least 30 seconds between measures
5. Trace the flexicurve shape onto the graph paper. Position the flexicurve so the C7 mark is at the corner of a grid square on the graph paper (on a straight, vertical line) and the L1 mark is on the same line. Trace the side of the flexicurve touching the skin onto the graph paper (Curve 1). Mark the points C7 and L1 on the flexicurve onto the paper. Straighten the flexicurve and remove the marks.
6. Repeat step 3-5 a further 2 times