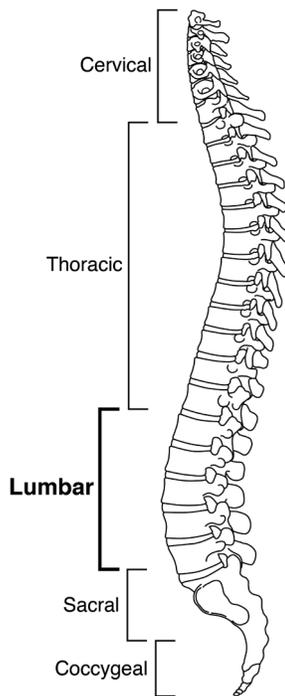


Lumbar Spine Injury

What is the lumbar spine?

The lumbar spine is the biggest and strongest part of the spinal column. It runs from the mid to lower back. It is made up of 5 vertebrae. These are bones that surround the spinal cord. There are disks between each vertebra.



What is a lumbar spine injury?

A lumbar spine injury can happen when a great amount of force is placed against the spinal column. An injury can happen if the spinal column is not strong enough to stand up to that force. Injury can occur to the vertebrae, disks, or the cord. This can cause pain, numbness, weakness, and tingling. Symptoms vary in each person.

What tests will I need?

- X-rays are tests that look at the bones in your spine.
- A CT scan is a test that uses x-rays to get detailed pictures of bones and other tissues.
- A physical exam will be done to check your spine to see if there is pain with movement or when pressure is applied.

How is it treated?

If you have an injury that needs treatment, you will see a spine specialist. This doctor will figure out the location and stability of the injury. The doctor will decide whether you need surgery. If you do not need surgery but a fracture is found, you may need to wear a brace. Your doctor will decide what type of brace you need and how long you will need to wear it.

What should I expect while in the hospital?

If you need a brace, you will have to lie flat in bed to keep your spine straight until a brace has been placed. This can be uncomfortable, but it is needed to protect your spine. In order to turn in bed, you must be rolled by the nursing staff. This is called “log rolling.” It allows you to be turned while keeping your spine straight.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person’s health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 8/2019. University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#6908