

# Spinal Stenosis

## What is Spinal Stenosis?

Narrowing of the spaces within your spine leading to pressure on the spinal cord or other nerves

## Where does it occur?

Mostly in the neck or low back

## Does it hurt?

Not Always!

Spinal stenosis is a narrowing of the spinal canal

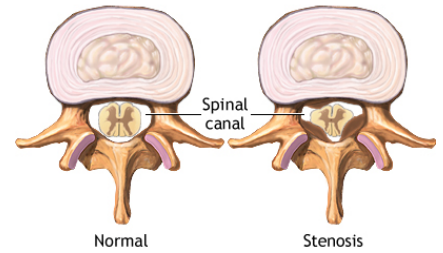


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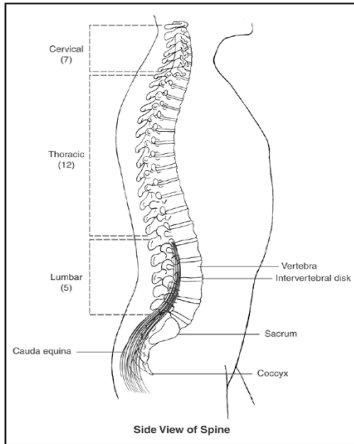


Photo Courtesy of: niams.nih.gov

## 3 Main Causes

- ❖ Normal Aging & Wear and Tear
- ❖ Osteoarthritis
- ❖ Spinal Injuries or Diseases of the Bone & Tissues



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## Symptoms

- ❖ Pain, numbness, and tingling down the arms or legs that increases with standing or walking
- ❖ Complaints decrease with sitting or folding forward
- ❖ Occasional problems with bowel or bladder function
- ❖ Weakness in the arms or legs
- ❖ Chronic Low Back Pain

## 3 Treatment Options

- 1) Physical Therapy
- 2) Lifestyle Changes
- 3) Steroid Injections or Surgical Options



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## Physical Therapy Focuses On

### Pain Relief Through:

**Stretching and Flexibility** – Exercises that help with mobility in your joints and muscles of your spine

**Strengthening** – Exercises to increase control of trunk to provide support for your spine. Arms & Legs strength takes load off the spinal joints.

**Aerobic Fitness** – To increase endurance and ability to tolerate all of the exercises above

**Physical Therapy Tools** – Electrical Stimulation, Ice, Education

## Lifestyle Changes

Exercise at least 150 minutes per week

Maintain a Healthy Body Weight

Use Supportive Chairs and Mattresses

Avoid Heavy Lifting

Be Aware of Proper Posture During Daily Activities



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## Steroid Injections or Surgical Options

**Steroid Injections** – Provide short-term symptom relief but does not eliminate the problem

**Spinal Decompression** - Removal of a part of the bone of the spine to increase space for the spinal cord or nerves. Must be followed up with an exercise program

**Spinal Fusion** – Boney fusion created to stop motion in parts of the spine causing pain. Does not stop the aging process of the bone.

**For other options, contact your primary care doctor**

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