Spinal stenosis

Overview

By Mayo Clinic Staff

Spinal stenosis is a narrowing of the spaces within your spine, which can put pressure on the nerves that travel through the spine. Spinal stenosis occurs most often in the lower back and the neck.

Some people with spinal stenosis may not have symptoms. Others may experience pain, tingling, numbness and muscle weakness. Symptoms can worsen over time.

Spinal stenosis is most commonly caused by wear-and-tear changes in the spine related to osteoarthritis. In severe cases of spinal stenosis, doctors may recommend surgery to create additional space for the spinal cord or nerves.

Types of spinal stenosis

The types of spinal stenosis are classified according to where on the spine the condition occurs. It's possible to have more than one type. The two main types of spinal stenosis are:

- **Cervical stenosis.** In this condition, the narrowing occurs in the part of the spine in your neck.
- **Lumbar stenosis.** In this condition, the narrowing occurs in the part of the spine in your lower back. It's the most common form of spinal stenosis.

Spinal stenosis care at Mayo Clinic

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