

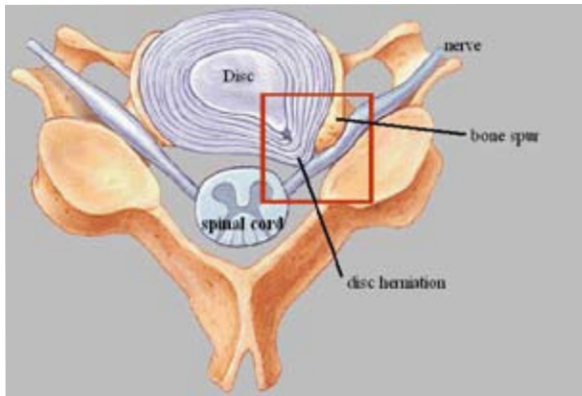


Texas Orthopedics,
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Cervical Radiculopathy [“pinched nerve” in the neck] and Cervical Spinal Stenosis [narrowing of the canal in the neck]

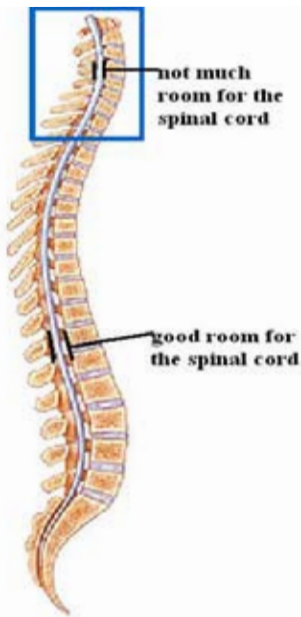
Cervical Radiculopathy

Degeneration of the **cervical spine (neck)** can result in several different conditions that cause problems. These are usually divided between problems that come from mechanical problems in the neck, and problems which come from nerves being irritated or pinched. A **cervical radiculopathy** is a problem that results when a nerve in the neck is irritated as it leaves the spinal canal. This condition usually occurs when a **herniated disc** or a **bone spur** is pinching a nerve root.



Symptoms: Weakness, pain, numbness and tingling sensations in the neck and arm and loss of reflexes may all occur. These symptoms may worsen when the neck is in different positions such as bending forward or backward.

Diagnosis: It may be diagnosed by imaging, such as an MRI or CT. Testing such as EMG/NCS may also be performed to examine the 'electrical system' of the body and determine the severity of nerve compression. Treatment may consist of physical therapy, injections, medications, and surgery.



Cervical Spinal Stenosis

In the late stages of spinal degeneration, bone spurs from the degenerative process can cause a condition known as **spinal stenosis**. As the bone spurs form, the size of the spinal canal becomes smaller. The bone spurs begin to press on the spinal cord or the nerve roots. Pressure on the nerves in the spinal cord can cause numbness, tingling, or pain in the arms, hands, and legs. This condition is sometimes called **cervical myelopathy**.

SYMPTOMS: When there is narrowing of the spinal canal, or the bony tube through which the spinal cord runs, the whole spinal cord may be affected. This is different than when the bone spurs only narrow one of the **foramen** - the openings where the nerve roots exit. The symptoms are much different. Pressure on the spinal cord, as it runs through the cervical spine, can cause many symptoms. Cervical stenosis can cause **weakness** and spasticity in the legs. Spasticity means you to lose control over your legs and you may have a great deal of difficulty walking due to loss of control of where you place your feet. You may have numbness in the arms and legs. Your reflexes may be increased in the legs. You may lose the strength in your legs and you may lose your "position sense". This is the sensation that allows you to "know" where your arms and legs are when you have your eyes closed. For example, you may not be able to tell whether your arm is up in the air or down by your side, unless you can see it. The treatment for spinal stenosis is usually spine surgery, although injections can sometimes help.