

# *Anatomy of The Spine*

## **Spinal Ligaments**

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There is a complicated network of ligaments, which hold all the spinal joints and adjacent vertebrae together. The adjacent vertebrae of the spine as well as joints are supported by tough slightly elastic tissue referred to as ligaments. Ligaments help keep the spine and vertebral segments biomechanically aligned during weight-bearing activities and movement.

The presence of numerous ligaments at the level of each intervertebral segment prevents excessive movement offering protection to other spinal soft tissues and the neurological elements within the spine. Many of the ligaments of the spine are highly innovative with specialized nerve endings. The ligaments can be a significant source of pain in the presence of trauma, infection, degenerative change or other causes of spinal tissue compromise. The main ligaments of the spine run the entire length of the spine along the front and back of the vertebral body. Ligaments can be shortened, and stiffen, leading to progressive loss of spinal joint or segment mobility. There are numerous causes for this loss of extensibility, some of which include ageing, diffuse, tissue scarring, and degenerative disc disease.