



# Biomechanics of Human Spine

#### Spine Anatomy



#### Lateral (Side) View of Normal Spinal Column







## **Cervical Spine**

- Seven vertebrae C 1-7
  More flexible
- Supports the head
- Wide range of motion
  - Rotation to left and right
- Flexion extension
   Up and down
   Peripheral nerves





The cervical vertebrae are identified by foramina transversaria .....vertebral artery



• From C3 to T1 there is a total of 10 saddle- shaped, diarthrodial

- articulation between the uncinate (lateral) process of adjacent body known as uncovertebral joints.
- They also facilitate the mobility of lower cervical spine.

# Joint of Luschka



Ligamentum Flavum

Ligament

Posterior Longitudinal Ligament

Ligament

Facet

Interspinous Ligament

Supraspinous Ligament

Anterior Longitudinal Ligament









- Mid-back or dorsal region
- Twelve vertebrae

#### • T 1-12

- Ribs attached to vertebrae
- Relatively immobile
- Peripheral nerves
  - Intercostal





## Lumbar Anatomy



#### 5 vertebrae L1-L5

- 5 intervertebral discs
- 5 pair of exiting nerve roots
- Lumbar lordosis L1-S1
  - The apex of lumbar lordosis L3-L4



- Lower back
- Carries the weight of the upper body
  - Larger, broader
- Peripheral nerves



## Lumbar Spine Anatomy



 Typical lumbar vertebra (L2)

- Body
- Vertebral foramen/canal
- Intervertebral foramen
- Pedicle
- Transverse process
- Lamina
- Spinous process
- Facet joints
- Pars interarticularis

### Sacral and Coccygeal region

#### Sacrum

- Triangular structure
- Base of the spine
- Connects spine to pelvis
- Nerves to pelvic organs
- Соссух
  - Few small bones
  - Remnant of tail









- In the sagittal plane
  - 'S' shape
- As a small child(c shaped)
  - When starts to sit-→Cervical Lordosis
- Toddler and adult
  - When starts to stand →Lumbar Lordosis
  - Allows spring-like action







#### Orientation of facet joints with respect to transverse plane





## Lumbar Spine ligaments





- Anterior longitudinal ligament
- 2. Posterior longitudinal ligament
- 3. Ligamentum flavum
- 4. Interspinous ligaments
- 5. Supraspinous ligament
- 6. Intertransverse ligaments





#### Failure Strength of Spinal Ligaments



ALL= anterior longitudinal ligament PLL=posterior longitudinal ligament LF = ligamentum flavum CL = capsular ligament ISL= interspinous ligament

The L5-S1 Segment is the most common site of problem in the spine ???

- This level bears more weight.
- COG pass directly through this vertebra
- Transition L5 Mobile and S1 Stable
- Large angle B/w L5 & S1
- Great amount of movement

### **Motion Segment**

- Two adjacent vertebrae
- Intervertebral disc
- (facet joints)
- Six degrees of freedom
  - Flexion-extension
  - Lateral flexion
- Axial rotation or Rotation (RT & LT)
- Lateral Flexion / Side bending (RT & LT)





Posterior View Rotation to the right



# Movement at the spinal segment in relation to the spinal articulations

Motion at the interbody and

Motion segment

- zygapophyseal joints are interdependent
- Amount of motion
  - Primarily depends upon the size of the disc
- Direction of motion
  - Primarily depends upon the orientation of the articulating facets

# Weight bearing properties of motion segment unit



#### Posterior oblique view of a functional segment unit

# Factors on which spinal mobility depends upon ???

#### The Disc to vertebral Height ratio

1:3 Cervical, 1:6 Thoracic, 1:3 Lumbar spine

#### The Vertebra's Width to Height ratio

- C Vertebra has relatively small anteroposterior and transverse diameters in relation to the body height
- Orientation of Articular processes
  - Superior articular facet of C Spine faces Posteriorly and slightly laterally, T- Spine faces Poserioly, Lumbar spine faces medially

The extent of Mechanical Displacement



Shape of Superior Articular facets (Maignee)

#### Intervertebral Disc

- Soft fibro-cartilaginous cushions
  - Between two vertebra
  - Allows some motion
  - Serve as shock absorbers
- Total 23 discs
- <sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> <sup>th</sup> of the spinal column's length
- Avascular
- Nutrients diffuse through end plates

#### Intervertebral Disc Functions

- Movement of fluid within the nucleus
  - Allows vertebrae to rock back and forth
  - Flexibility
- Act to pad and maintain the space between the twenty-four movable vertebrae
- Act as shock absorbers




## Intervertebral Disc Anatomy

Axial (Overhead) View of Intervertebral Disc

- Spongy center
  Nucleus pulposus
- Surrounded by a tougher outer fibrous ring
  - Annulus fibrosus





## Annulus Fibrosus

- Strong radial tire—like structure
- Series of lamellae
- Concentric sheets of collagen fibers
  - Orientated at various angles
  - Connected to end plates
- Encloses nucleus pulposus



Anterosuperior view, vertebral column transversely sectioned through IV disc

## Annulus

## In Bending (flexion)



- Increased tensile force posteriorly
- Increased compressive force anteriorly (vice versa)

#### In Rotation

- Reorientation of collagenous fibers
- Tightening of fibers in one direction
- Loosening of fibers in opposite direction

## Nucleus Pulposus

- Has more water and PGs
- PG are macro-molecules
  - Attract and retain water
  - Hydrophilic gel–like matter
    - Resists compression
- Amount of water
  - Activity related
  - Varies throughout the day

## Theory of weight bearing

- Nucleus pulpous *imbibes water*
- Develops internal pressure
- Pressure exerted in all directions

#### Lateral forces

Against annulus

#### Superiorly and inferiorly directed forces

- Against end plates
- Increases stiffness of end plate and annulus fibrosus



when uneven loading takes place



## **Creep Characteristics**



Grade 0 - Non-degenerative disc (more viscoelastic) Grade 2 – Mild degenerative disc (less sustenance) Grade 3 – Severe degenerative disc (more deformation)

# Applied Anatomy

- The water binding capacity of the disc decrease with age and degenerative changes begin to occur after 2<sup>nd</sup> decade of the life.
- The disc contain 85% t0 90% of water, but the amount decrease up to 65% with age.





حضرت ابوہریرہ رضی اللہ تعالیٰ عنہ سے مروی ہے كه حضور في أكرم عليظة في فرمايا: الله تعالى فرماتا ب میں اینے بندے کے گمان کے ساتھ ہوتا ہوں جودہ میرے بارے میں رکھتاہے، اور میں اس کے ساتھ ہوتا ہوں جب وہ بچھ پکارتا ہے۔

## Shear & Tensile Characteristics

- In direct shear tests
- Shear stiffness in horizontal direction=260 N/mm<sup>2</sup> (Spine rarely fails in pure shear)
- Similarly under normal physiologic activities
  - Pure tensile loading doesn't occur
  - But annulus undergoes tensile loading during, Bending, Axial rotation, Extension

### **Compressive load characteristics**

Cancellous bone Large deformation Up to 9.5% before failure Cortical bone Small deformation Up to 2% before failure



Position of body

## Measurements of In vivo Loads

- Needle pressure transducer used to measure mechanical pressure on intervertebral disc.
- Calibrated (tuned)to zero.
  - Introduced into nucleus pulpous of cadaveric functional unit
- Inserted in vivo in L3-4 disc



## Pathology of Intervertebral Disc Injury Disc Bulge

#### Herniation:

- a general term used when
- there is any change in the shape
- of the annulus that causes it to
- bulge beyond its normal perimeter



Pathology of Intervertebral Disc injury, disc bulge

#### Prolapses

 Fissures provide pathway for irritating nuclear fluid to escape onto perineurial tissue OR

rupture of the nuclear material into the vertebral canal

> Persistent and chronic back pain



## Extrusion

Extension of nuclear material beyond the confines of the posterior longitudinal ligament or above and below the disc space, as detected on MRI, but still in contact with the disc OR

Nuclear material dissects its way through breaches in annulus fibrosus

## Free sequestration

 the extruded nucleus has separated from the disc and moved away from the prolapsed area





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## Muscles of the Spine

- Muscles of neck and trunk named in pairs, with one on the left and the other on the right side of body
- Anterior Aspect
- Posterior Aspect
- Lateral Aspect

## **Anterior Aspect**

- Cervical spine::: Bilateral tension development results in flexion of head.
- Unilateral tension development in prevertebrals contributes to:
  - lateral flexion of head toward contracting muscles or,
  - to rotation of head away from contracting muscles
  - Thoracic muscles
- Abdominals



## **Cervical Muscles Group**

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## **Cervical Muscles Group**



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## **Cervical Muscles Group**





Rectus capitis posterior major muscle Rectus capitis posterior minor muscle Obliquus capitis superior muscle Obliquus capits inferior muscle





## **Cervical Muscles Group**





#### -LONGUS CAPITIS

#### LONGUS COLLI



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### **Posterior Aspect**

Thoracic and Lumbar Muscle groups: erector spinae (iliocostalis, longismiss, spinalis) Semispinalis deep segmental spinal muscles (multifidi, rotators)





# 2a. Semispinalis







#### Rectus abdominis

## **Abdominals**

# Transverse abdominus



# Internal oblique



External oblique



### Lateral Aspect

 Many muscles of neck and trunk cause lateral flexion when contracting unilaterally, but either flexion or extension when contracting bilaterally.

### Muscles: sternocleidomastoid

- levator scapulae, scalenus anterior, posterior and medius
- Lumbar region: quadratus lumborum, psoas major



### Loads on the Spine

#### Forces acting on spine:

- Body weight
- Tension in the spinal ligaments
- Tension in surrounding muscles
- Intraabdominal pressure
- Any applied external loads
- Body Movement Speed

MECHANICAL STABILITY OF THE LUMBAR SPINE

- IAP (intra-abdominal pressure)
- Co contraction of the trunk muscles
- external support

## **Intra-Abdominal Pressure**

- AP contribute to both unloading and stabilization of the lumbar spine.
- IAP within the abdominal cavity by a coordinated contraction of the diaphragm and the abdominal and pelvic floor muscles
- Act as a "pressurized balloon" attempting to separate the diaphragm and pelvic floor
- This creates an extensor moment that decreases the compression forces on the lumbar discs





#### Core Activation: The 'Expansion and Compression' cycle of the Core driven by the breath

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### The Role of Intraabdominal Pressure?



McGill, author of our text chapter, thinks it stiffens trunk which reduces tissue strain and tendency to buckle – but not pressure in the IVDs

Recent studies using fine-wire EMG of the deeper abdominal muscles found that the transversus abdominis is the

primary abdominal muscle responsible for IAP generation

 As the abdominal musculature contracts, IAP increases and converts the abdomen into a rigid cylinder that greatly increases stability as compared with the multisegmental spinal column Current research suggests that the transversus abdominis muscle, together with the diaphragm, plays an important role in stabilizing the spine in preparation for limb movement



## **Trunk Muscle Co-Contraction**

- With higher levels, co-contraction, spine compression and trunk muscle stiffness increase Loss of spine stability can be achieved through repetitive loading.
- This can be achieved through repetitive continuous motions that fatigue the trunk muscles

The reduction in the functional capacity of the flexion extension muscles was compensated for by secondary Muscle groups and led to an increased couple motion pattern that is more injury prone

### **External Stabilization**

- Restriction of motion at any level may increase motion at another level.
- The use of back belts as a means of preventing low back injury remains controversial.



Originally it was believed to assist in increasing IAP as a way of unloading the spine during lifting, however, inconclusive evidence exists as to the biomechanical effectiveness of these devices







# Low Back Pain

- 75-80% of population will experience it at some time in their life
- Mechanical stress plays a significant role
- Relative Stability of Spine
- 60% of cases is idiopathic (unknown origin)
- Abdominal & back extensors exercises help in treatment



# Soft Tissue Injuries

- Contusions
- Laceration
- Muscle Strains
- Ligament Sprains
- laceration
- Spasms result usually from underlying problems.











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### **Acute Fractures**

- Transverse or Spinous fractures from hard blow (contact sports) or extremely forceful contraction
- Extremely serious because of fragile spinal cord.
- Rib fractures usually due to blows from sports, cause pain with each inhalation.
  - Potential for serious damage to underlying soft tissues (lungs)

### **Stress Fractures**

 Most common type of vertebral fracture is in pars interarticularis

- Spondylolysis
- Spondylolisthesis
- Spondylolysis and spondylolisthesis don't tend to heal with time
  - Common with sports involving repeated hyperextension of the lumbar spine.

### **Stress Fractures**

- Spondylolysis is a defect of a vertebra. More specifically it is defined as a defect in the pars interarticularis of the vertebral arch. The great majority of cases occur in the lowest of the lumbar vertebrae (L5), but spondylolysis may also occur in the other vertebrae.
- Spondylolysis can progress until one or more vertebrae slip out of place which is then called <u>spondylolisthesis</u>.
  - Due to fracture of pars Interarticularis bilaterally
  - It can result in
    - Narrowing of posterior joint space, Stress to spinal nerves, the spinal cord, or the cauda equina
    - pain can lead to reduced mobility and inactivity. Inactivity can result in weight gain, loss of bone density, and loss of muscle strength and flexibility of other areas of the body.

#### LUMBAR VERTEBRA

BODY

VERTEBRAL FORAMEN

PEDICLE

TRANSVERSE PROCESS



LAMINA

SUPERIOR PROCESS ARTICULAR

SPINOUS PROCESS \_





### **Disc Herniations**

- Cause of 1-5% back pain cases
- Protrusion of part of nucleus pulposus from the annulus.
- Traumatic or stress related.
- Common sites: between 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> cervical vertebrae and 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> lumbar and 5<sup>th</sup> lumbar and 1<sup>st</sup> sacral.
- Sensory nerves supplying anterior and posterior longitudinal ligaments generate pain signals.


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### spondylosis



# **Airbag Injuries**

- Motor vehicle accidents continue to be the leading cause of injury-related deaths in the United States.
- Studies generally concluded that front seat occupants are adequately Protected against frontal impact if belts are worn in an airbag equipped vehicle

 Passenger-side airbags pose a lethal threat to children riding in the front seat of an automobile

- The back seat is the safest place for children of any age to ride.
- Never put an infant (less than 1 year old) in the front of a car with a passenger-side airbag. Make sure everyone is buckled up.
- Unbuckled occupants can be hurt or killed by an airbag









# Whiplash Injuries

- Relatively common injury to cervical region.
- Usually from automobile collisions, where neck undergoes sudden acceleration and deceleration.
- Symptoms:
  - Neck pain, muscle pain, pain or numbness radiating from neck to shoulders, arms, hands and a headache (present in 50-60% of most cases)

#### Whiplash Injuries (Head and Neck)



