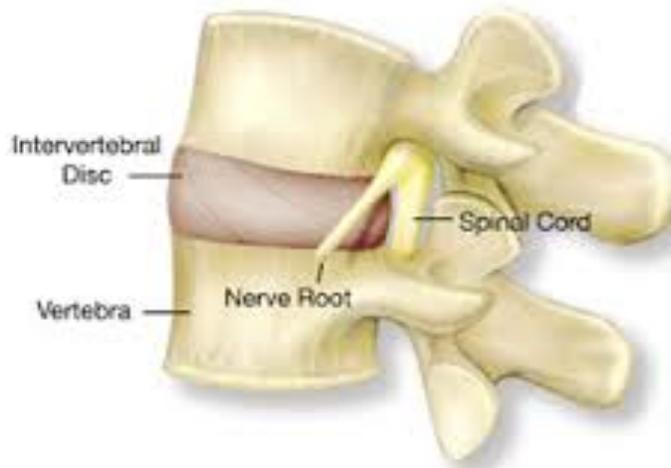


## Structure of the Back

The back is made up of bones, muscles, nerves, and discs. The bones called vertebrae make up the spine in 4 sections, cervical, thoracic, lumbar, and sacral. Inside this bony structure is the spinal cord. The cord has nerve root branches which come out of small spaces in the spinal column.

### Normal Spinal Segment



## Do you need Xrays or other imaging?

Your doctor will order the right imaging test

- if there is weight loss you cannot explain
- if you have had a fever >102 degrees
- if you lose control of your bowel and bladder
- if you have a history of cancer
- if you lose feeling or strength in your legs
- If your doctor decides that you do not need imaging, then you have avoided radiation risks.

## Road to Recovery

- 90% of back pain is non-specific. What that means is that the exact cause is not necessary to help you on the road to recovery.
- Your doctor has excluded more serious causes. So, don't be afraid to move.
- Ask your doctor if you can take over the counter NSAIDS like ibuprofen.
- Bend and lift correctly. Ask your physical therapist for diagrams and instructions.
- Your physical therapist will give you stretching exercises.
- If you are overweight, losing weight will help.