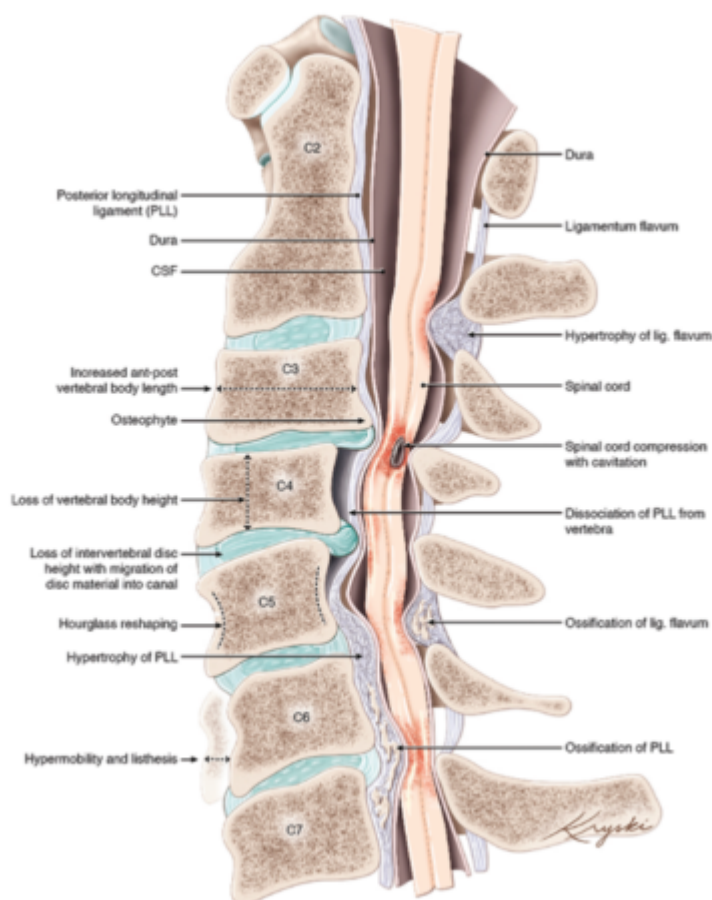


Cervical degenerative disc disease



Cervical [degenerative disc disease](#) is generally discussed in terms of [cervical spondylosis](#), a term which is sometimes used synonymously with [cervical spinal stenosis](#).

[Spondylosis](#) usually implies a more widespread age-related degenerative condition of the cervical spine including various combinations of the following:

1. Congenital cervical spinal stenosis (the shallow cervical canal ¹⁾)
2. Degeneration of the cervical [intervertebral disc](#) producing a focal stenosis due to a cervical bar which is usually a combination of:
 - a. Osteophytic spurs ([hard disc](#) in neurosurgical jargon)
 - b. And/or protusion of the intervertebral disc material ([soft disc](#))
3. Hypertrophy of any of the following (which also contribute to canal stenosis):
 - a. Lamina
 - b. Dura
 - c. Articular facets
 - d. Ligaments, including

Increased stenosis in extension is more common than flexion (based on MRI studies ²⁾ and cadaver studies), largely due to posterior inbuckling of [ligamentum flavum](#) ³⁾.

[Posterior longitudinal ligament](#): may include [ossification of the posterior longitudinal ligament](#) ⁴⁾. May be segmental or diffuse. Often adherent to dura.

[Ossification of the ligamentum flavum](#) ⁵⁾ ([yellow ligament](#)).

4. Cervical [subluxation](#): due to disc and facet joint degeneration.

5. Altered mobility: severely spondylotic levels may be fused and are usually stable, however there is often hypermobility at adjacent or other segments.

6. Telescoping of the spine due to loss of height of vertebral bodies. Shingling of laminae.

7. Alteration of the normal lordotic curvature ⁶⁾ (NB: the amount of abnormal curvature did not correlate with the degree of myelopathy)

a. reduction of lordosis including:

Straightening

Reversal of the curvature (kyphosis): may cause bowstringing of the spinal cord across osteophytes

b. exaggerated lordosis (hyperlordosis): the least common variant (may also cause bowstringing).

Although the majority of individuals > 50 yrs old have radiologic evidence of significant degenerative disease of the cervical spine, only a small percentage will experience neurologic symptoms ⁷⁾.

Cervical disc herniation

see [Cervical disc herniation](#).

Cervical spinal stenosis

see [Cervical spinal stenosis](#).

Pathophysiology

see [Cervical degenerative disc disease pathophysiology](#).

Clinical Features

see [Cervical Degenerative Disc Disease Clinical Features](#)



Degenerated disc, C5-C6 with [osteophytes](#)

Outcome

see [Cervical degenerative disc disease outcome](#).

Case series

[Cervical degenerative disc disease case series](#).

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