

# Cervical Spine Decompression

[Spinal surgery procedure](#) that removes any structures that are compressing the nerves in the cervical (neck) section of the spinal canal or vertebral foramen (opening through which the spinal cord passes). The cervical section of the spine begins at the base of the skull and supports the neck. During surgery, a small section of the bone that is compressing the nerve root is removed to alleviate pressure and allow the nerve root to heal. Sometimes fragments of material from the spine are lodged under the nerve root as well, and are removed during cervical decompression surgery.

In some cases, cervical decompression surgery must be combined with cervical fusion surgery. If too much of the bony structures that are pressing on the nerve needs to be removed, it can affect the stability of the spine. Spinal fusion corrects the instability by permanently joining (fusing) the vertebrae together to prevent them from moving. If the cervical decompression surgery is minimally invasive, the structure of the spine will stay intact and there will be no need for spinal fusion.

Cervical spinal stenosis is one of the most common reasons for cervical decompression surgery. Cervical spinal stenosis is a condition in which the spinal canal and/or the opening in the vertebra (vertebral foramen) in the neck become narrowed. If the narrowing is substantial it can cause nerve compression and result in pain, loss of balance and coordination, neck stiffness and incontinence.

## Types of Cervical Decompression

The majority of the following types of cervical decompression surgery are performed with the goal of leaving the spinal structure intact. Once the compressive structures have been removed, your spine surgeon will evaluate the stability of your spine and determine if cervical fusion surgery is also needed.

[Foraminotomy](#)

[Laminotomy](#)

[Laminoplasty](#)

[Corpectomy](#)

[Cervical microdiscectomy](#)

[Cervical laminectomy](#)

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