

Fifth lumbar vertebra

The fifth [lumbar vertebra](#) is characterized by its body being much deeper in front than behind, which accords with the prominence of the sacrovertebral articulation; by the smaller size of its spinous process; by the wide interval between the inferior articular processes, and by the thickness of its transverse processes, which spring from the body as well as from the pedicles.

The fifth lumbar vertebra is by far the most common site of [spondylolysis](#) and [spondylolisthesis](#).

Most individuals have five lumbar vertebrae, while some have four or six. Lumbar disorders that normally affect L5 will affect L4 or L6 in these latter individuals.

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