

# Uncovertebral arthrosis



Uncovertebral [arthrosis](#) is osteoarthritic changes seen at the [uncinate process](#) of the [cervical spine](#). It is a common site of arthrosis regularly observed at the lower cervical vertebrae.

## Clinical presentation

Clinical presentation will vary; it could be a sudden onset of pain, stiffness or even chronic pain; however, it can also be asymptomatic. There generally is distinguished osteophytes which can affect close anatomical structures.

Posterior spurring can impinge on the intervertebral foramen, whilst anterior osteophytes combined with fibroligamentous thickening can compress the anterior-medial aspect of the vertebral artery.

## Pathology

Uncovertebral arthrosis is thought to be the result of dehydration/reduction of the intervertebral disc, leading to an increased load between the cervical vertebrae and hence the uncovertebral joints. It typically is seen in the lower cervical vertebrae due to the increased load at these levels.

## Radiographic features

Uncovertebral arthrosis typically appears as pitting of the articular surface and an overall distortion of the uncinate process with associated osteophyte formation.

Pertinent features of uncinate arthrosis include:

hypertrophy and blunting of the uncinate process

lateral stenosis of the joint

pseudofracture (cervical split)

lucent line over the mid-vertebral body exhibiting the uncovertebral joint on the lateral projection due to osteophytes

narrowing of the intervertebral foramen on oblique view

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