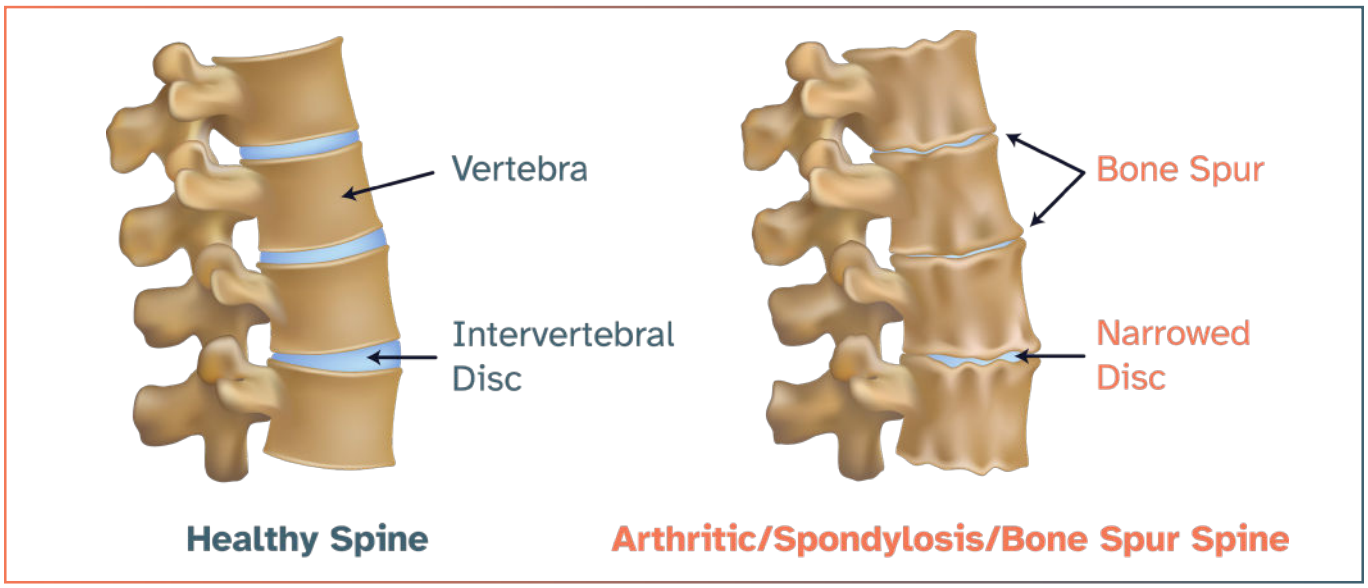
PHYSIO Ed.
ACTIVE FOR A LIFETIME

CERVICAL ARTHRITIS/ SPONDYLOLYSIS/BONE SPUR
Fact Sheet

OVERVIEW

A vertebral bone spur is a growth of bone projecting from the edge of the vertebra. This growth causes pain and inflammation if it rubs against the spinal nerves or other vertebrae and is common in individuals over 60 years of age. It narrows the space for nerves to exist, causing symptoms in the arms and legs. It occurs in the most stressed segments of the spine at the connection of the neck to the body and at the lowest levels of the low back.



CAUSES OF CERVICAL ARTHRITIS

This is a degenerative condition most often caused by normal aging processes. As cartilage is worn down by overuse, the movement and force on the vertebrae stimulates the body to thicken the bone. This new bone is the bone spur. It is most often coupled with an underlying condition such as osteoarthritis, trauma, degenerative disc disease, or obesity.

SYMPTOMS OF CERVICAL ARTHRITIS

- Back and Neck pain
- Difficulty standing or sitting for long periods
- Aching more in the mornings
- Pain radiating down the arm(s) or leg(s)
- Numbness or burning sensation
- Weakness in arm(s) or leg(s)

CERVICAL ARTHRITIS/ SPONDYLOLYSIS/BONE SPUR
Treatment + Exercises

TREATMENT OF CERVICAL ARTHRITIS

- Rest and Cold Pack Therapy
- Over-the-counter anti-inflammatories such as ibuprofen may help relieve pain and reduce inflammation
- Prescribed stretching exercises may be beneficial
- Flexion type spine exercises may be started to improve flexibility of the spine, mobilization of the surrounding areas to take the stress off the spine, hip stretching to allow better standing and strengthen trunk muscles to improve control and posture.

EXERCISE 1: Seated Levator Scapulae Stretch





Instructions:
Begin in a sitting position. Place one hand on your shoulder and your other hand on your head.

Gently bend your head forward and away from your shoulder blade until you feel a gentle stretch in your upper back and neck.

Make sure to keep your back straight during the exercise.

EXERCISE 2: Seated Cervical Traction



Instructions:
Begin sitting upright holding the ends of a towel that is placed below the back of your head.

Gently pull the towel forward and upwards with both hands, until you feel a pressure relief in your neck.

Hold, then relax and repeat.

Make sure to sit tall and keep your neck relaxed.

Do not pull your body or head forward or shrug your shoulders during the exercise.

Important:
The therapeutic exercises described on this page are for reference purposes only and may or may not apply directly to your condition. Only perform the exercises assigned by your physician. By using this information, you understand the potential risks connected with activity in any exercise, physical fitness or training program.