

# Spinal Stenosis - Key Things You Must Know



Spinal problems are known to always cause long-term complications and if the treatment is delayed, severe after-effects are noticed.

We are here to discuss one of the troublesome spinal conditions known as spinal stenosis.

Severe spinal issues are often fixed with surgery, and it also requires the application of special spinal implants depending upon the type of condition and location within the spine.

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Let us now discuss spinal stenosis in detail.

## **What is Spinal Stenosis?**

Spinal stenosis is a condition characterized by the narrowing of spaces within the spine. When this occurs, it results in compression of nerves in

the spine along with the spinal cord. Thus, pressure on spinal nerves causes complications like pain, numbness, and tingling in various parts of the body. Besides this, many other complications may also be on the cards. Back pain and sciatica are a few of the commonest problems that may occur due to spinal stenosis.

Spinal stenosis is not a condition that arises suddenly rather, it is a condition that develops gradually. Osteoarthritis is known to be the commonest cause of the condition.

Spinal stenosis can occur anywhere in the spine but, the lower back and neck regions are two of the commonest where this condition is often reported.

### **What Are the Symptoms of Spinal Stenosis?**

The symptoms associated with the condition may vary depending upon the location of the condition within the spine.

#### **Symptoms of Cervical Stenosis**

Numbness or tingling in arms, foot, or leg

Weakness in hand, arms, foot, or leg

Difficulty in maintaining balance or walking

Pain in the neck

Bowel and bladder dysfunction, especially in critical situations

#### **Symptoms of Lumbar Stenosis**

Tingling or numbness in foot or leg

Back pain

Weakness in foot or leg

Difficulty while walking or standing for long periods

Pain or cramping in the legs while standing for long periods

### **What Are the Causes of Spinal Stenosis?**

Some people are born with a smaller spinal canal but in most cases, people develop this condition over time. Some of the common causes of the condition may include:

Formation of bone spurs due to wear & tear caused by osteoarthritis

Herniated disc

Thickening of ligaments in the spine

Spinal tumors

Spinal injuries resulting due to trauma like a car accident or falling from a height

### **How the Condition is Diagnosed?**

During the diagnosis of spinal stenosis, the healthcare service provider asks about the signs and symptoms experienced by the patient. Besides this, a medical history check and physical examination are also performed to notice the signs. Certain imaging tests are also required to confirm the condition and they may include:

X-rays

MRI

CT-scan

## **What is the Treatment for Spinal Stenosis?**

The treatment of spinal stenosis is based on the type and its severity. At first, the doctor may prescribe medications to curb pain and other symptoms related to the condition. Medicines prescribed may include:

Analgesics

Antidepressants

Antiseizure Drugs

Opioids

The doctor also suggests physical therapy to strengthen muscles, improve and maintain the flexibility and stability of the spine, and improve balance.

When these treatments fail, surgery may be recommended to relieve pressure on the nerves and the spinal cord.

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