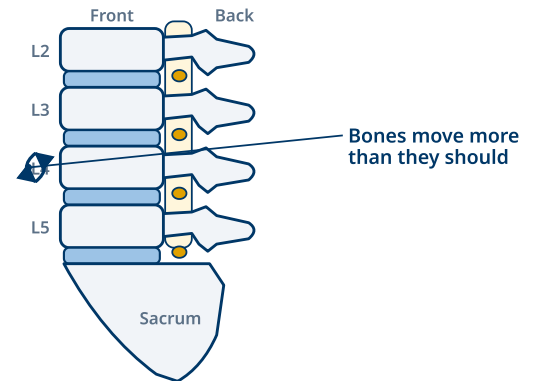


Spinal Instability

What it is

Spinal instability means the bones of the spine move more than they should. This can come from wear, injury or past surgery. It may cause pain or press on nerves.



Common symptoms

- Mechanical back or neck pain that worsens with movement and eases with rest
- A feeling that the back “gives way”
- Leg or arm pain, numbness or weakness if nerves are affected

Self-care tips

- Stay as active as you can. Short, easy walks may help.
- Change position often. Try not to sit for more than 30 to 45 minutes at a time.
- Heat or ice for 15 to 20 minutes may ease pain. Put a towel between it and your skin.
- Lift with your legs, keep the load close to your body, and do not twist.

What to expect at GSMC

At your visit: A spine specialist asks about your symptoms and checks your strength, feeling and walking.

Tests: You may need X-rays, an MRI or a CT scan.

Your plan: Many people start with care that does not involve surgery. Surgery is discussed only if it may help.

When to call us

- Pain that keeps getting worse, or does not get better with care
- New numbness, tingling or weakness in an arm or leg
- Pain with fever, chills or weight loss you cannot explain
- Pain that keeps you from sleeping or doing daily tasks

Call 911 or go to the emergency room for loss of bladder or bowel control, numbness in the groin or inner thighs, or sudden leg weakness.

Call 732-202-3000

One number for all offices. Questions about this handout? We are glad to help.

Our 7 offices: Whiting · Toms River (Hooper Ave) · Brick · Barnegat · Manahawkin · Freehold · West Long Branch

gsmedicalcenter.org/services/spine/conditions/spinal-instability/



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This handout is general information and is not a substitute for medical advice.