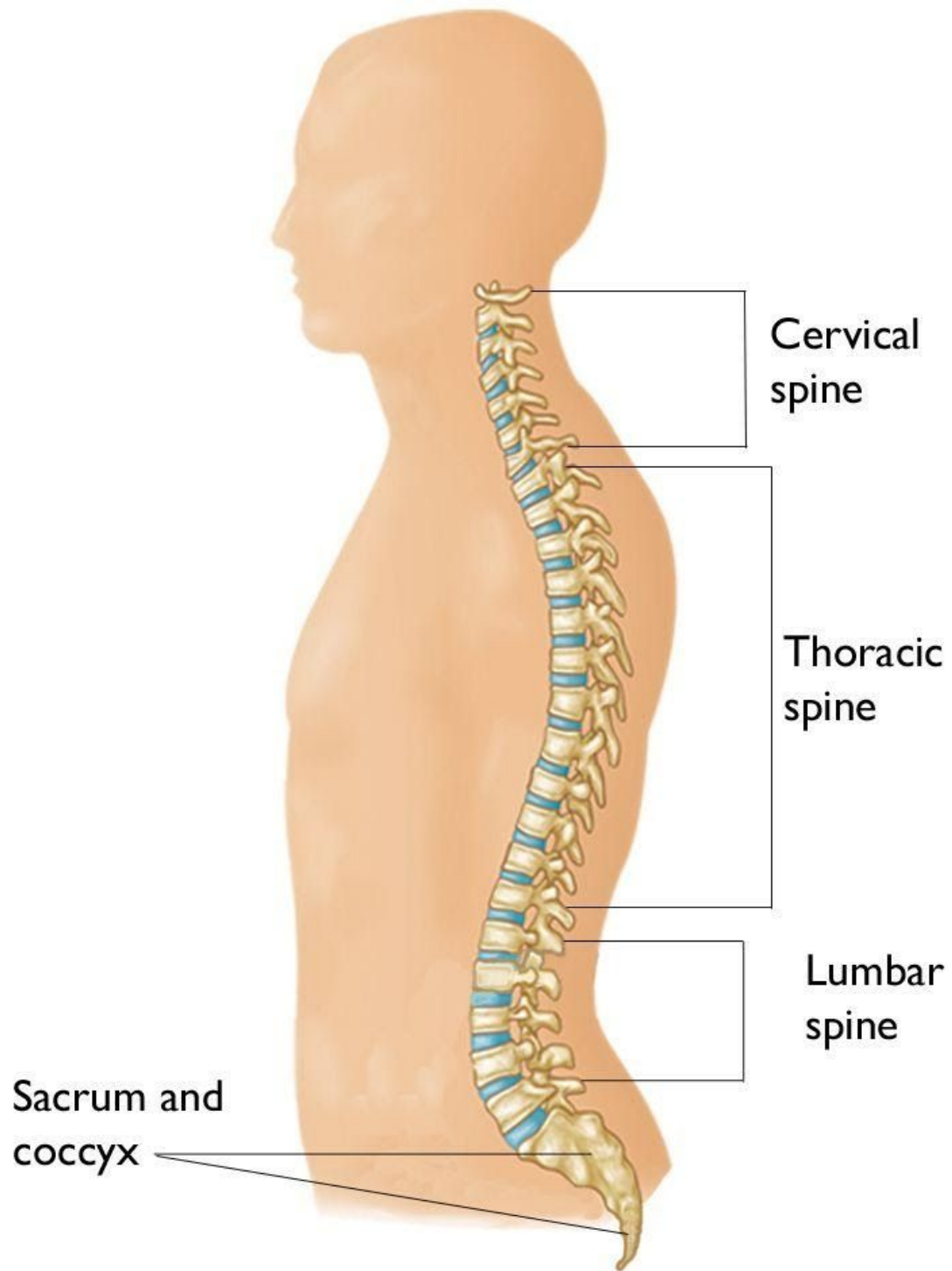


Spinal Fusion

Spinal fusion is surgery to permanently connect two or more vertebrae in your spine, eliminating motion between them.

Spinal fusion involves techniques designed to mimic the normal healing process of broken bones. During spinal fusion, your surgeon places bone or a bonelike material within the space between two

spinal vertebrae. Metal plates, screws and rods may be used to hold the vertebrae together, so they can heal into one solid unit.



Why it's done

Spinal fusion permanently connects two or more vertebrae in your spine to improve stability, correct a deformity or reduce pain. Your doctor may recommend spinal fusion to treat:

- **Deformities of the spine.** Spinal fusion can help correct spinal deformities,

such as a sideways curvature of the spine (scoliosis).

- **Spinal weakness or instability.** Your spine may become unstable if there's abnormal or excessive motion between two vertebrae. This is a common side effect of severe arthritis in the spine. Spinal fusion can be used to restore spinal stability in such cases.

- **Herniated disk.** Spinal fusion may be used to stabilize the spine after removal of a damaged (herniated) disk.

