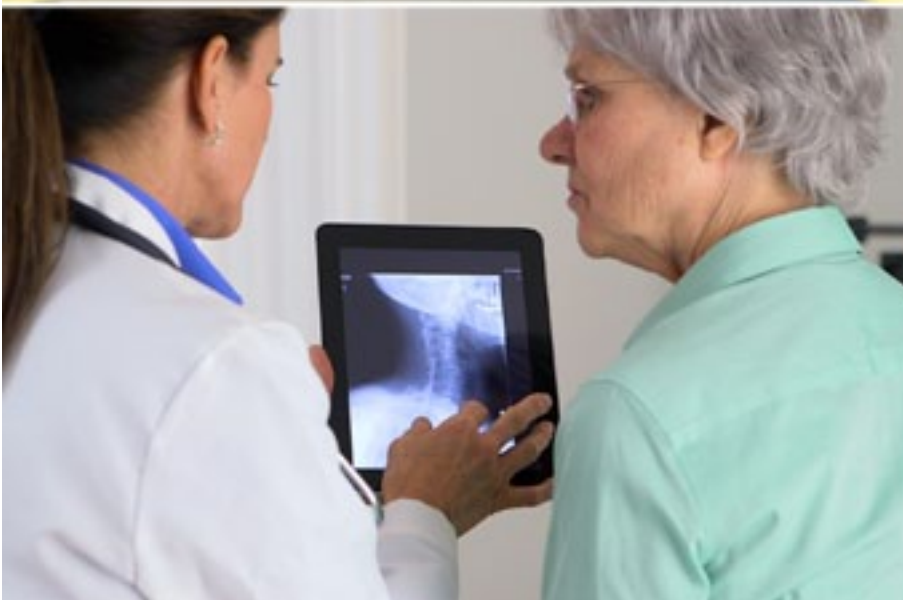


Myelopathy



Overview

This is a problem that affects your spinal cord. It happens when something presses harmfully against it. Your spinal cord is the main nerve pathway between your brain and your body. Pressure on it can cause problems throughout your body.

Causes

Anything that reduces the space around your spinal cord can cause myelopathy, even the normal wear and tear of everyday life. It can be caused by an injury to your neck or your back. It can result from diseases such as arthritis, or from a tumor.

Symptoms

Myelopathy has a wide range of symptoms. These depend on where the compression happens along your spinal cord. If it's in your cervical spine, you may have problems such as pain, numbness, weakness or tingling. You may feel symptoms in your neck, shoulders, arms or hands. You may feel them in your legs or feet. Compression in your lower back can cause pain and cramping in your legs. Myelopathy can cause problems with walking and with balance. It can also cause problems with your bladder and bowels.

Treatment

Treatment options depend on your symptoms. You may benefit from medications or injections. You may benefit from physical therapy. If these aren't helpful, you may need surgery to relieve the compression. Your healthcare provider can create a plan that is right for you.