

Laminectomy

Laminectomy is surgery that creates space by removing the lamina — the back part of a vertebra that covers your spinal canal. Also known as decompression surgery, laminectomy enlarges your spinal canal to relieve pressure on the spinal cord or nerves.

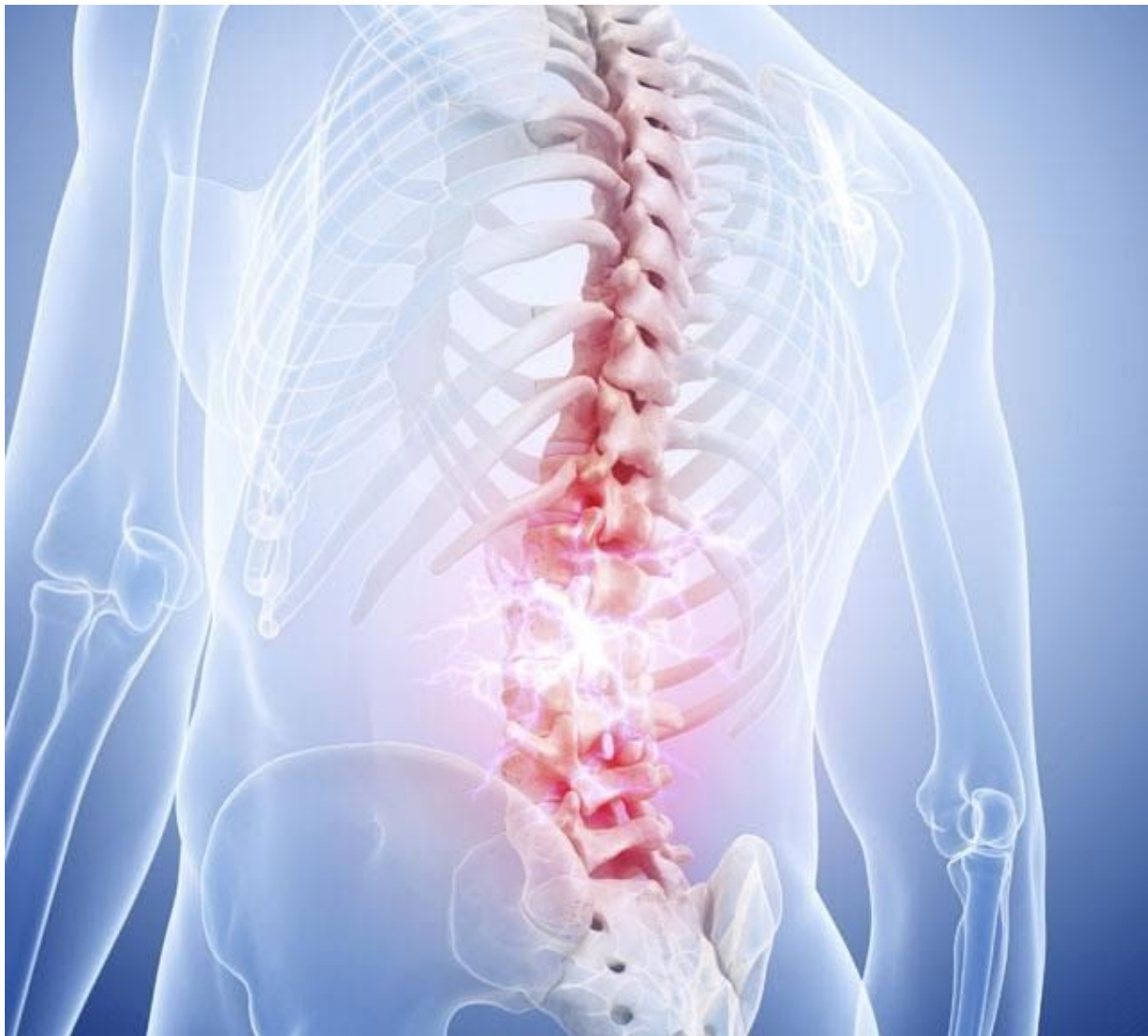
This pressure is most commonly caused by bony overgrowths within the spinal canal, which

can occur in people who have arthritis in their spines. These overgrowths are sometimes referred to as bone spurs, but they're a normal side effect of the aging process in some people.

Laminectomy is generally used only when more-conservative treatments — such as medication, physical therapy or injections — have failed to relieve symptoms.

Laminectomy may also be

recommended if symptoms are severe or worsening dramatically.



Why it's done

Bony overgrowths within the spinal canal can narrow the space available for your spinal cord and nerves. This pressure can cause pain, weakness or numbness that can radiate down your arms or legs.

Because the laminectomy restores spinal canal space but does not cure you of arthritis, it more reliably relieves radiating

symptoms from compressed nerves than it does back pain from spinal joints.

Your doctor may recommend laminectomy if:

- Conservative treatment, such as medication or physical therapy, fails to improve your symptoms

- You have muscle weakness or numbness that makes standing or walking difficult
- You experience loss of bowel or bladder control

In some situations, laminectomy may be necessary as part of surgery to treat a herniated spinal disk. Your surgeon may need to remove part of the lamina to gain access to the damaged disk.

Lumbar Laminectomy

