



THE **THREE** MAIN INJURIES ANY SPINE CAN HAVE

ZCC
Zeiszler Chiropractic Clinic

952.432.0700

“Don’t make your injury experience worse by choosing the wrong Doctor or the wrong Attorney to assist you.”

Written by: **Jeffrey Cronk, DC, JD** CEO SmartInjury Doctors & SmartInjury Lawyers and Director of Education for Spinal Kinetics.

**UNDERSTANDING THE
THREE MAIN INJURIES
ANY SPINE CAN HAVE
IS WHAT SETS OUR CLINIC APART
AND THE REASON WHY ANYONE
WHO INJURES THEIR SPINE SHOULD
SCHEDULE A SPINAL EVALUATION
WITH US IMMEDIATELY.
KNOWING WHAT TO DO WITH
THESE THREE INJURIES IS
THE KEY TO YOUR RECOVERY!
MOST SPINAL INJURY
PATIENTS NEVER GET THE
EXTENT OF THEIR INJURIES
FULLY DIAGNOSED**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- I. There are three main injuries that can happen to any Spine and why finding a qualified Doctor is essential.
- II. The NON-Disc ligament injuries are the most severe injuries, and most often missed.
- III. Doctors are missing your injuries because of improper imaging tests. Proper stress radiology imaging and analysis must be performed.
- IV. Getting you back to daily life takes an incredible teamwork effort involving you, the Doctor and the Attorney. Let's get you back to living life on your terms!

There are three main injuries that can happen to the Spine. Most providers are not properly trained to diagnose your injury, leaving you suffering from chronic pain and disability many years later.

There are three main injuries your spine can have. These are vertebral fractures (breaking the bones in your neck or back), and two different injuries to the connective tissue. One tissue injury is a disc herniation which is picked up on MRI. The other spinal connective tissue injury is to the “spinal support ligaments” or “non-disc ligaments”. The job of these support ligaments is to hold your spinal bones in their correct position. Damage to these ligaments causes spinal instability (spinal parts excessively move and are loose, causing inflammation and irritation to the spinal nerves-it also cause the joint or joints to wear out quicker over time). Of the three injuries, the one that has the potential to be most problematic and cause you long-term, chronic pain is actually the damage to the spinal support ligaments causing instability.



Fracture

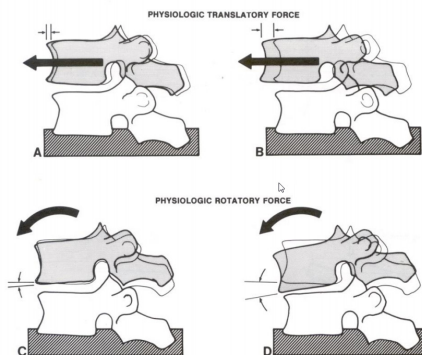
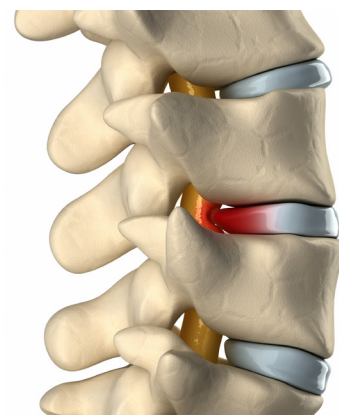


Fig. 5-55. (A) A stable spine motion segment which translates very little when subjected to an anteriorly directed force. (B) An unstable motion segment, which characteristically translates more under the same load. (C, D) Here the motion segments are being subjected to a physiologic bending moment. A greater angulation occurs in an unstable spine (D) as compared to a stable spine (C).

Spinal Instability

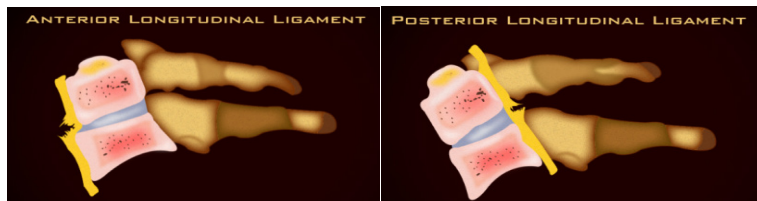


Disc Herniation

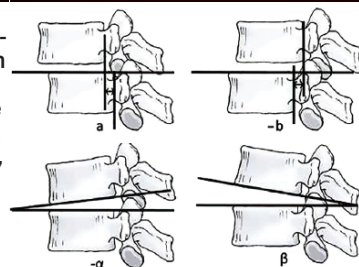
When spinal support ligaments are damaged, that section of the spine becomes permanently unstable. This is the most common reason for chronic pain and disability resulting from spinal injuries.

Many people have heard of “discs”. These are the 23 spinal ligaments that provide shock absorption to the spine. The discs are very important, but they are not the main stabilizing elements of the spine. There are also far fewer discs (23) to damage compared to the stabilizing spinal support ligaments (197). If we feel your disc may have been damaged (herniated), an MRI study is used to image it and we will refer you out for this diagnostic test. If both, the disc and the support ligaments, are significantly damaged, treatment can take longer to stabilize your condition, which of course makes sense. Be diligent with your treatment because what we do here together will have an effect, good or bad, on how your spine behaves in the future.

Now to understand this injury better, let's compare this spinal connective tissue injury to an injury to the knee joint. If you injure your ACL (anterior cruciate ligament), it is considered a major injury to the ligaments in the



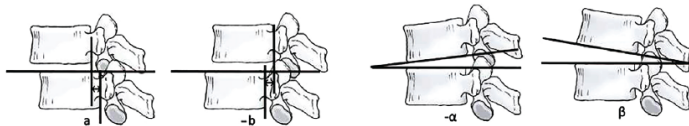
Injuries to the NON-Disc Spinal Ligaments show up as excessive motion on stress imaging. The more excessive motion there is, the more damage there are to the ligaments. This causes a greater need for care, length of treatment, and therapies in many cases. Additionally pain management injections and even spinal fusion may be warranted.



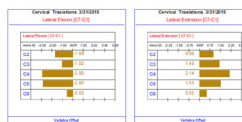
knee, and you may not be able to walk. Your spine is composed of 31 joints like the one in your knee (only much smaller), and an injury to any of those spinal support ligaments may leave you in pain like the pain you would feel if you sprained your ankle or tore your ACL! A major difference between a knee ligament injury and a spinal ligament injury, is that the spinal support ligament injury can cause a whole lot of other serious symptoms besides pain, which we will explain shortly.

TWO SEPARATE AND UNIQUE SPINAL LIGAMENT INJURIES

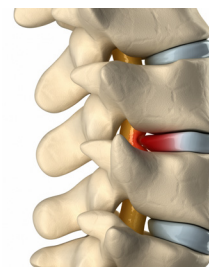
NON-Disc ligament Damage is Picked up with Specialized X-Ray Procedures. THESE ARE NOT FOUND ON MRI.



Excessive translation or angular findings show severe spinal instability due to the NON disc ligament damage!



CRMA®
Computerized Radiographic Mensuration Analysis

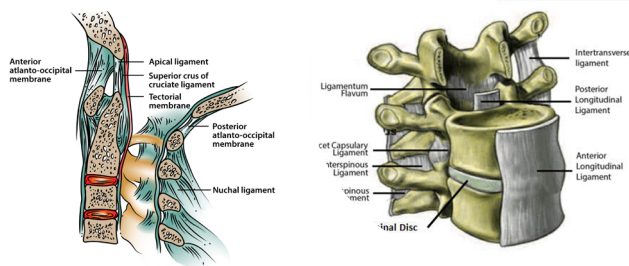


Each of these spinal connective tissue injuries then are diagnosed differently, treated differently, and they have very different symptoms associated with them. To understand which spinal connective tissue you may have injured, let's start with your symptoms, and you will begin to be able to diagnose your own injury as well as the spinal injuries of others.

The NON-Disc ligament injuries are the most severe injuries. Disc injuries only cause 2 primary symptoms and do not account for the majority of your suffering.

A disc injury causes only cause two basic symptoms; localized pain in that area of the spine and/or a radicular complaint (Radicular: involving the nerve root). A common radicular complaint is when the pain from the disc injury travels down the arm or arms if it is in the neck, or down the legs if it is in the lower back. A Disc injury can be very painful but it still just has those two symptoms generally associated with it, SO if a patient has any other symptoms, it is generally caused by damage to these support ligaments, which causes a spinal instability. Now, I want you to look at the graphics of what a NON-Disc or a spinal support ligament injury can produce in terms of symptoms. You will see that there are a LOT more problems that this injury can cause!

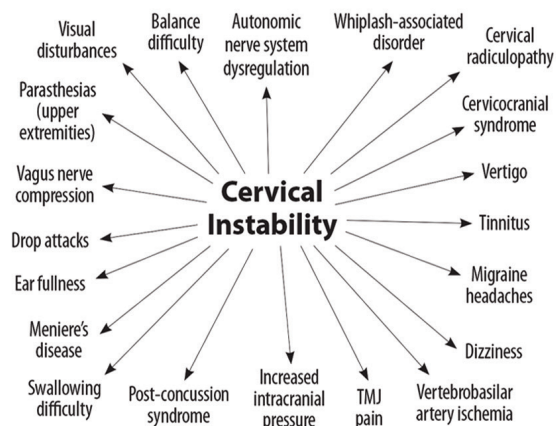
Anyone you know that suffers from chronic spine related pain, has experienced a spinal ligament injury creating spinal instability. This instability causes them to suffer with chronic problems such as chronic lower back pain, chronic neck pain and even chronic headaches. As a matter of fact, look at the symptom images below. If any person that you know suffers from any of those symptoms chronically (persists consistently beyond three months), they more than likely



MIDBACK PAIN SEVERE FATIGUE SINUS CONGESTION
LOWER BACK PAIN MIGRAINE HEADACHES
FACIAL PAIN VISUAL DISTURBANCES LOSS OF VOICE
SHOULDER PAIN DIFFICULTY SWALLOWING
SCAPULAR PAIN PAIN RADIATING DOWN THE ARMS
THE SYMPTOMS OF SPINAL LIGAMENT INJURY
PAIN RADIATING DOWN THE LEGS HEADACHES
CONCUSSION SYNDROME EAR PAIN RINGING IN THE EARS
NECK PAIN BLADDER OR BOWEL DYSFUNCTION
NUMBNESS, TINGLING OR A SENSE OF WEAKNESS OR HEAVINESS IN THE ARMS
DISTURBANCES IN MEMORY DIFFICULTY BREATHING
NUMBNESS, TINGLING OR A SENSE OF WEAKNESS OR HEAVINESS IN THE LEGS
DISTURBANCES IN CONCENTRATION

The NON-Disc Spinal Ligament Injuries Destabilize the Spine and Cause Spinal Instability with many more Symptoms!

The many syndromes and symptoms caused by cervical instability.

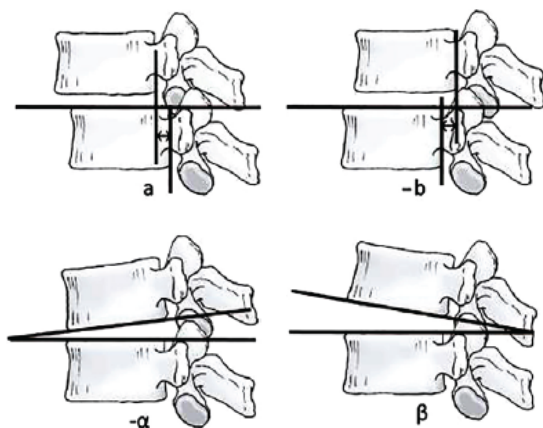


HAVE this condition and they simply have never worked with a doctor that could identify it (diagnose it), and more importantly treat it.

In your care we may use multiple diagnostic tests to evaluate the injuries to your spine.

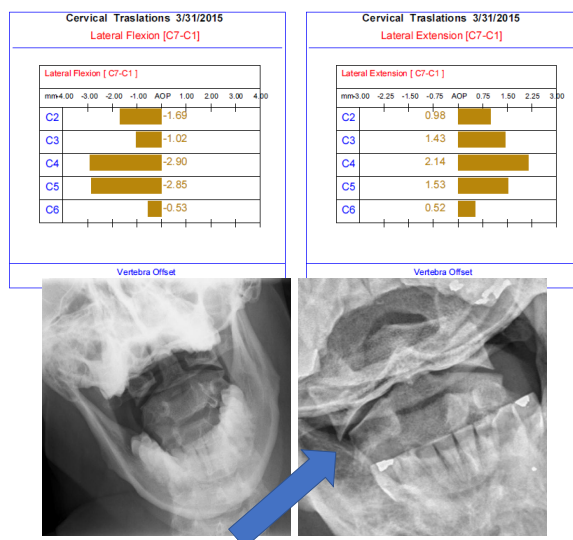
Doctors are missing your injuries because they are using the wrong imaging tests! An MRI is not enough. The proper stress radiology imaging and analysis must be performed to discover spinal instability.

The first test that we will do is to determine the spinal support ligament injuries. This entails a specialized set of spinal x-rays called stress x-rays. These will be taken and sent out to a specialized radiology service to have them accurately measured for spinal instability. If we believe that the spinal discs may have also been injured, we will send you out for an MRI. Don't worry, we only



Excessive translation or angular findings on a CRMA® study show severe spinal instability due to the NON disc ligament damage!

CRMA® is performed by a Board Certified Medical Radiologist



work with the best facilities when it comes to these procedures, and we will get your results quickly.

Test results are typically received within 1-2 business days once the test has been performed. Damage to a spinal ligament is also called a sprain injury. With this test we will be able to immediately determine the grade of sprain (severity), as well as the degree of spinal instability present.

We will then be able to modify your treatment plan accordingly. The more excessive motion that is detected, the more damage to the spinal ligaments there is. The more damage that there is, the more treatment you may need to get better. This may include chiropractic care, physical therapy, pain management services if needed, and in a very small percentage of cases, a surgical consult.

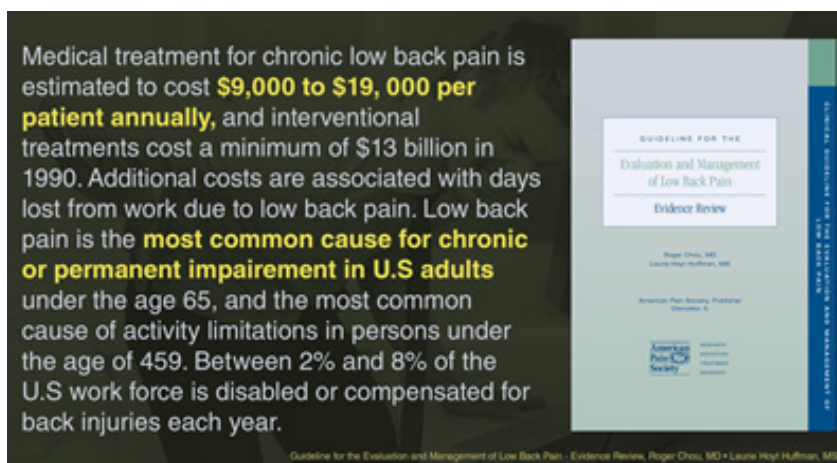
Don't worry! Our job is to accurately diagnose your injuries and get you stabilized and resolved as quickly as possible. We are very good at what we do! That being said, we are going to need your help. Most people try to minimize these injuries simply because they do not realize the statistics associated with them. Again, these injuries are the number one cause of chronic pain and disability.



As I indicated earlier, the reason why these statistics are so bad is primarily due to the patient seeking treatment with a doctor that had no idea how to identify and treat these injuries. If you don't think that is true, just look around you and you too will begin to see all the people that suffer from chronic lower back pain, chronic neck pain or chronic headaches, to name a few. If you ask them if they have ever been tested for spinal instability, they will almost 100% of time either say no or tell you they have no idea what you are talking about.

We take this condition very seriously as statistically 55% or more of patients that have a moderate to severe spinal ligament injury, never fully recover and that is expensive when it is looked at in terms of potential future medical care costs. The American Pain Society says the medical cost alone to manage this injury when in the lower back can be \$9,000.00 - \$19,000.00 per year, and we can only surmise that it would be close to the same when it is in the neck. The loss in future quality of life can be an even bigger price to pay.

Look, our goal here is simple. We want to help you get back to your pre-injury status as quickly as possible so that you can get back to doing the things that you enjoy, pain free, BOTH now and far into the future! Great injury rehabilitation can save a fortune in future medical/chiropractic/physical therapy costs. So, you want to really focus on getting this injury rehabilitated FULLY and not try to cut corners or stop care premature-



ly before we have achieved maximum results. Doing so can be very expensive for you in your future, so take time and maximize your results right now, as you NEVER get this time back. So, let's do it right! We will help you every step of the way.

Getting you back to living your life on your terms! It takes a team to get you back to a high quality life as quickly as possible.

To do this we need you to follow your treatment plan and be an active participant with us in your care. We will be giving you additional resources that will show you how to assist in your own recovery, as well as help you form habits that will assist in the long-term health of your spine. We need you to communicate quickly about any concerns or questions that you may have right away, while in treatment. And lastly, we need you to understand that when something is unstable it is "prone to erratic or unpredictable behavior." If your neighbor is unstable, they are prone to erratic or unpredictable behavior. Spinal insta-



bilities are no different. As you go through treatment to stabilize this condition it is not uncommon for a "flare up" to occur. This may seem like you are right back at day one. You are not! You simply need to get in right away for a treatment or two and you are right back on the road to recovery.

Also, long term we may be making recommendations for supportive care after the conclusion of your claim. This is care that will be recommended so that you can continue to keep your spine stable and healthy for the rest of your life and avoid the mistakes that many have made and led to a life of chronic pain.

This will be addressed when your primary injury care is concluded. Please, let us know if you have any questions regarding your care or your condition. We highly recommend that you pass this booklet on to your medical doctor if you are working with one, and your attorney if you have one or if you retain one in the future. They need to understand your injuries as well.

We are so grateful for referrals! Trusting us with you and your family's health is the greatest gift we could ask for.

Lastly, *we always appreciate referrals*. If someone you know has recently injured their spine, or suffers from some form of chronic pain, please make sure they get a copy of this booklet as they too run the risk of working with a clinic that does not understand how to fully diagnose their injuries, or the "root" cause of their chronic pain, therefore they continue to suffer needlessly. We appreciate your help and welcome to our center!

