



About the Spine

The Role of the Spine

The spine fulfils several vital roles in the body.

- On the most basic level, the spine provides the structural support for the rest of the body, allowing us to stand in an upright position, and sustaining a lot of the weight of the body.
- The spine also houses and protects the vital spinal cord, a thick bundle of nerves that carries messages from all parts of the body to the brain.
- The spine, in its protective role, is vitally important to the optimal functioning of the rest of the body.



What is the spinal cord and where is it found?

The spinal cord:

- is made up of millions of nerve fibres that carry messages to and from the brain, arms, legs, the trunk and vital organs of the body e.g. the bladder, the bowel;
- is an extension of the brain running from the neck to the lower back;
- lies inside the vertebral column (back bone) and is protected by it;
- is important in the co-ordination and functioning of the body; and
- the spinal cord is the consistency of dried toothpaste and incredibly fragile.



Disclaimer: This fact sheet is for education purposes only. Please consult with your doctor or other health professional to make sure this information is right for you.