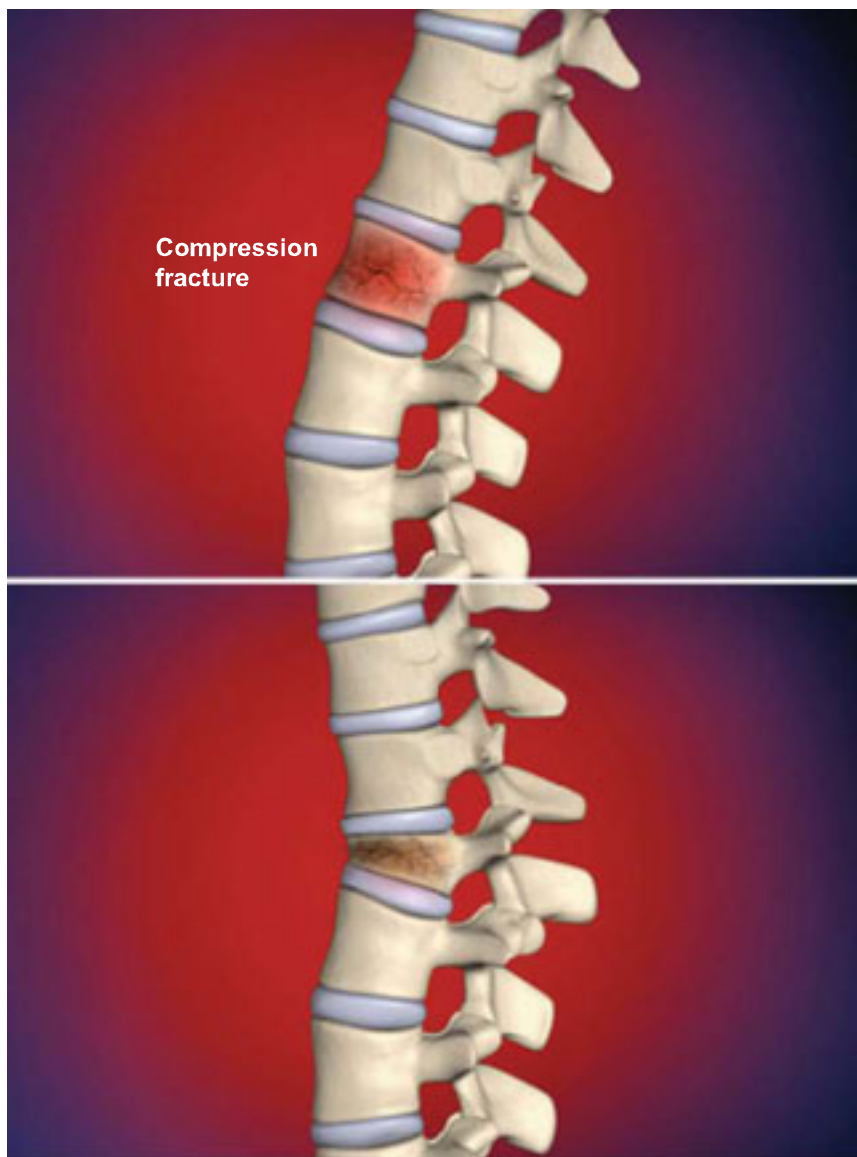


COMPRESSION FRACTURES OF THE SPINE



Overview

This type of fracture is a collapse of the vertebral bone that can affect one or more vertebra. It can result in a severe deformity of the spinal column. Compression fractures may affect any of the vertebrae, but most commonly occur in the lower thoracic and upper lumbar regions.

Causes

Compression fractures can be caused by traumatic injury, such as a hard fall. But many cases of compression fracture develop as a result of osteoporosis. A person with osteoporosis may develop compression fractures during routine daily activities, and may not realize the extent of their injuries until they experience severe deformity of the spine.

Symptoms

Symptoms of compression fracture typically include pain and a forward curving of the spine that results in a hunched appearance and the loss of height. Symptoms may also include a loss of range of motion and reduction of sensation in the extremities.

Treatment

Treatment options may include rest, medications to control pain, and physical therapy. If these options are not successful, procedures such as vertebroplasty or kyphoplasty may be used to stabilize the fracture and prevent further collapse of the bone.