

Spinal cord compression

When cancer has spread to the bone, it may spread to the spine. The growth of the tumour or cancer can cause pressure on the spine and tissues around the spinal cord. This can result in spinal cord compression.

A spinal cord compression is a medical emergency. Treatment needs to happen right away to help lessen or prevent further damage to your spinal cord.

What you may notice with spinal cord compression:

- ✓ Back or neck pain that gets worse over time
- ✓ In the arms or legs
 - numbness
 - weakness or a feeling of losing power in your legs
 - pins and needles
 - tingling sensation
- ✓ Bowel and bladder
 - leaking stool or urine
 - bladder feels full, but cannot urinate

If you have any of these symptoms, you need to go to the Emergency Department today.

When you get to the Emergency Department:

- ✓ Tell the doctors and nurses that you have cancer.
- ✓ Ask “Could this be spinal cord compression?”
- ✓ Give this handout to the emergency room doctor who may need to contact a doctor from the Juravinski Cancer Centre at 905-387-9495.