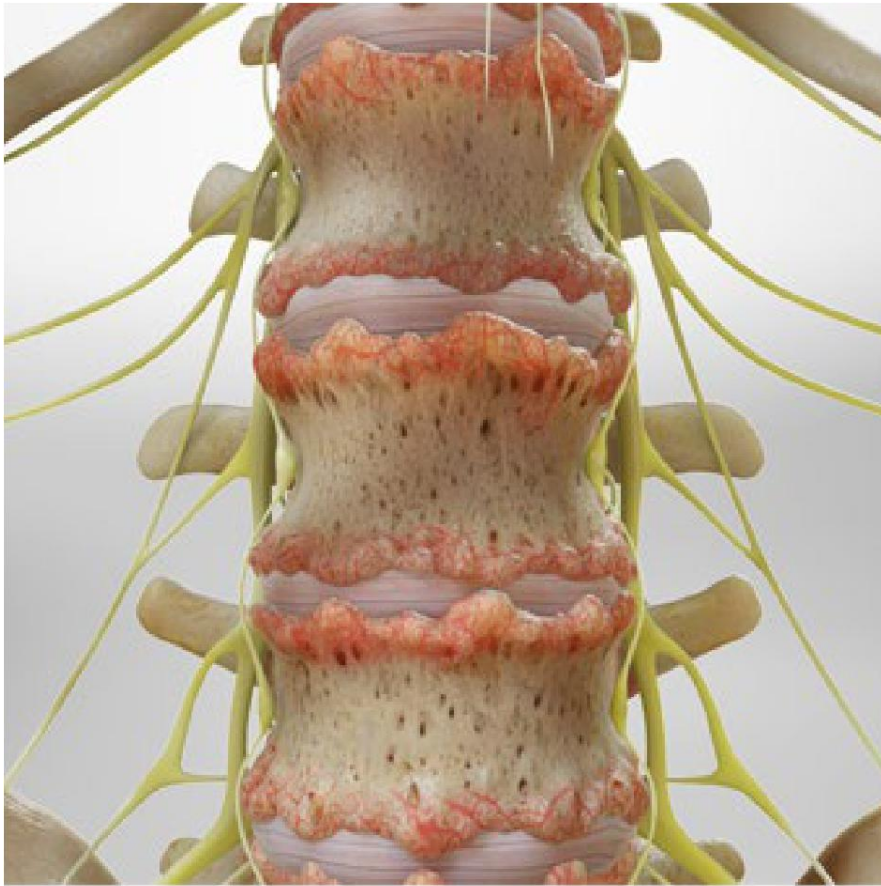




Ankylosing Spondylitis (AS)



Overview

This disease of the spine leads to pain and stiffness. Over time, it can cause some back bones to fuse together.

Causes

What causes this disease? We don't fully understand it. It's more common in men, and it tends to run in families. We think it may involve your genes, because many people with this disease have a specific type of gene. Other factors may be involved, too.

Symptoms

What are the symptoms? You may have pain and stiffness in your lower back and hips. This may be most noticeable when you start moving after a period of rest, like when you wake up in the morning. You may have a stooped posture. This disease may affect the joints between your ribs and spine. If so, it may be hard for you to take a deep breath. There is a wide range of other problems, too, like weight loss, fatigue, joint pain and eye inflammation. Symptoms can come and go. And, they may be different from person to person.

Treatment

We treat ankylosing spondylitis with medications to control inflammation and pain. Physical therapy is an important part of management. And, some people may benefit from surgery to fix a damaged joint. Your doctor will create a care plan that's right for you.

