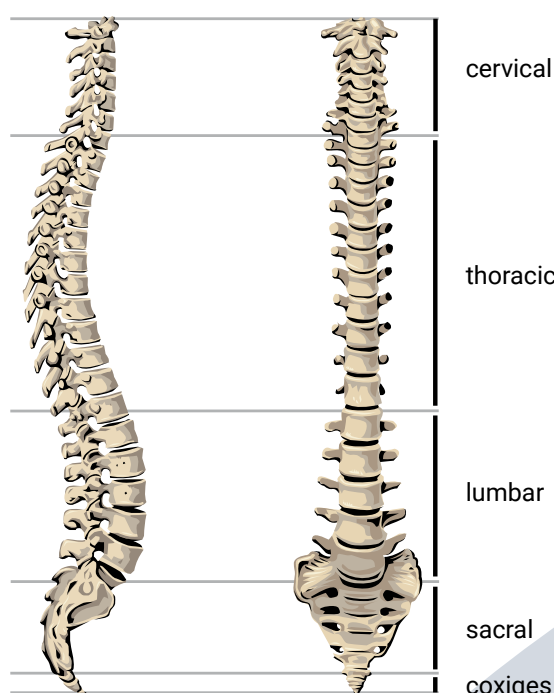




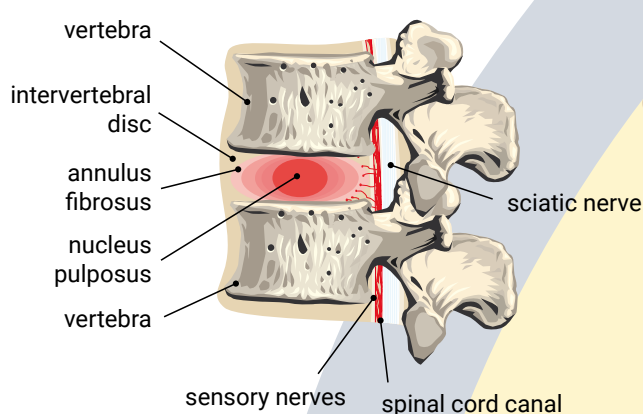
THE **SPINE** IS THE SUPPORT OF THE UPPER PART OF THE BODY. IT ALLOWS US TO STAND UP STRAIGHT, BEND, ETC., AND COVERS AND PROTECTS THE SPINAL CORD. MOST OF THE PROBLEMS THAT OCCUR WHEN HANDLING LOADS INCORRECTLY AFFECT THE SPINAL COLUMN.

BASICALLY, THE SPINAL COLUMN IS MADE UP OF:

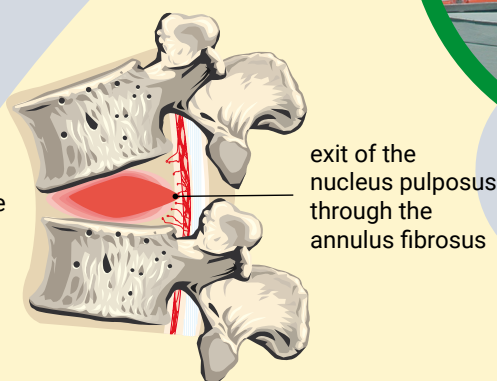
- THE **VERTEBRAE**, WHICH ARE THE BONES THAT FORM THE SPINAL COLUMN.
- THE **INTERVERTEBRAL DISCS**, WHICH ARE A KIND OF CUSHION, CALLED A FIBROUS RING, THAT SEPARATES THE VERTEBRAE FROM EACH OTHER AND CUSHIONS THE PRESSURE BETWEEN THEM WHEN WEIGHTS ARE PLACED ON THEM.



HEALTHY INTERVERTEBRAL DISC



DAMAGED INTERVERTEBRAL DISC



Lift weights by bending your knees until you can grasp the object comfortably and **keep your back straight**. It will cost you less and take less effort than bending at the waist because your leg muscles are larger and stronger and fatigue more slowly. The greater the leverage you use with your back, the greater the effort made and the more dangerous the injury to the lumbar vertebrae.



When handling loads, **make sure that the object is as close to your body as possible, above your hips and below your shoulders**. This is the optimum height for handling loads, so that the spine suffers less.

If you have to carry or lift a load, do it as close to your body as possible, with your **arms outstretched and your back slightly tilted back**; in this way, you achieve better balance and reduce the compressive forces on the spine, thus reducing the risk of injury.



Never twist at the waist with a load. If you must turn, do so by moving your feet and orienting them in the direction in which you are going to move or place the load.

When sweeping, **make sure the broom handle is long enough so you do not have to bend over**; use your arms to avoid bending at the waist and move the broom as close to your feet as possible. This will keep your spine straight and prevent twisting movements.

