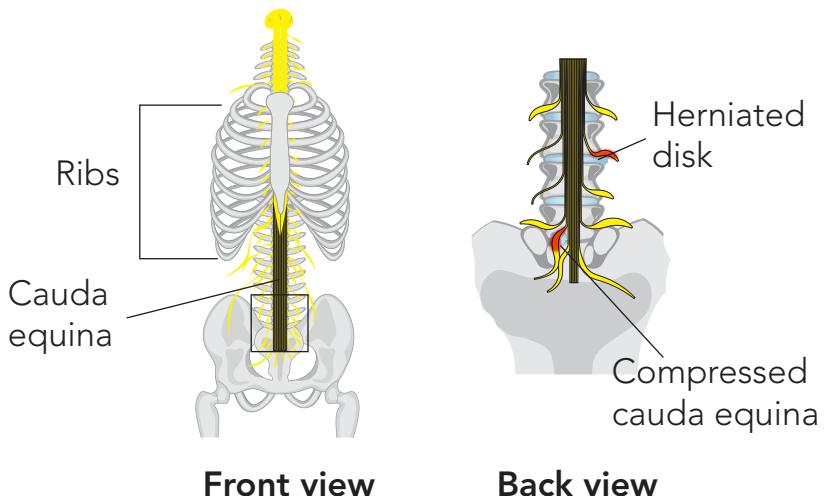


RECOGNISING THE RED FLAGS OF CAUDA EQUINA SYNDROME

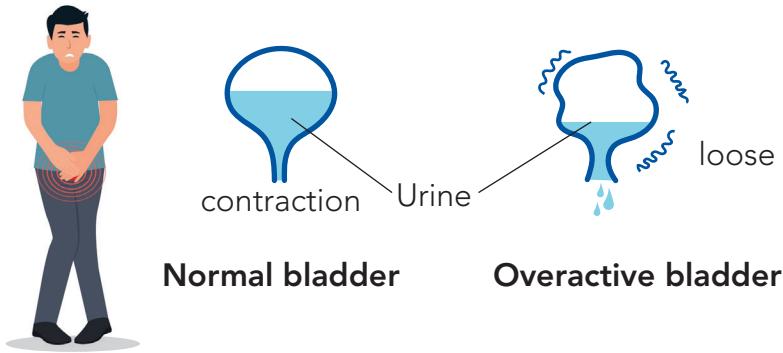
What to Know and When to Act

Cauda Equina Syndrome is a rare but serious condition that affects the bundle of nerves at the end of the spinal cord. Early recognition and urgent treatment are critical.



Red Flag Symptoms – Seek Emergency Care Immediately

If you experience any of the following, go to the Emergency Room immediately:



- ⚠ Loss of bladder or bowel control (incontinence or inability to urinate)
- ⚠ Numbness or tingling in the saddle area (around the buttocks, genitals, or inner thighs)
- ⚠ Sudden or severe weakness in both legs
- ⚠ Difficulty walking or standing due to leg weakness
- ⚠ Recent, unexplained bladder retention or overflow
- ⚠ Sexual dysfunction not previously present.

These symptoms may indicate compression of the spinal nerves that control your bladder, bowel, and legs, and require urgent surgical attention to prevent permanent damage.





Why Immediate Action Matters

Delays in diagnosis and treatment can lead to:

- Permanent paralysis or weakness in the legs
- Ongoing problems with bladder or bowel function
- Sexual dysfunction
- Chronic pain or numbness.

Acting quickly can protect your long-term quality of life.

FAQs

Some Common Questions about Cauda Equina Syndrome

Q: Can Cauda Equina Syndrome come on suddenly?

A: Yes. It can develop suddenly or over a few hours to days. Any new, rapidly progressing symptoms should be treated as an emergency.

Q: What causes Cauda Equina Syndrome?

A: The most common cause is a large slipped disc pressing on the nerves. Other causes may include spinal injury, tumours, infections, or narrowing of the spinal canal.

Q: What should I do if I suspect I have it but the symptoms are mild?

A: Do not wait. Even if symptoms seem minor or vague, go to the Emergency Room and clearly state your concerns. Prompt imaging (MRI) is needed to confirm the diagnosis.