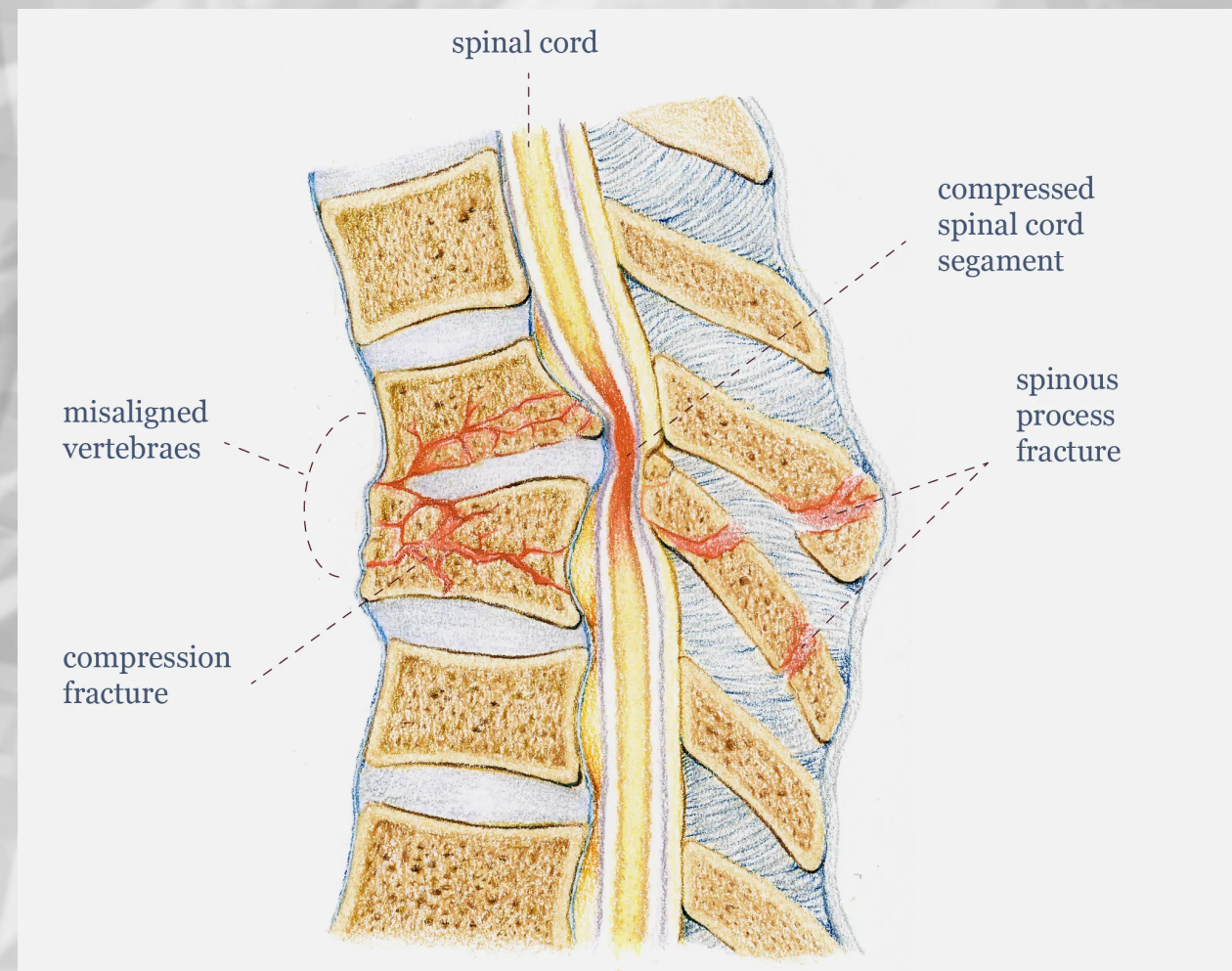


SPINAL CORD COMPRESSION IN THE EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT

WHAT IS IT?

SPINAL CORD COMPRESSION (SCC) RESULTS FROM PROCESSES THAT COMPRESS OR DISPLACE ARTERIAL, VENOUS, AND CEREBROSPINAL FLUID SPACES, AS WELL AS THE CORD ITSELF



WHAT TO LOOK FOR...

1. BACK PAIN - ACUTE OR CHRONIC (OFTEN DESCRIBED AS A TIGHT BAND AROUND THE CHEST OR ABDOMEN)
2. HISTORY OF METASTATIC MALIGNANCY, OSTEOPOROTIC COMPRESSION FRACTURES AND DISC DISEASE
3. NUMBNESS OR PARASTHESIA
4. WEAKNESS OR PARALYSIS OF LOWER LIMBS
5. BLADDER OR BOWEL DYSFUNCTION
6. HYPER-REFLEXIA

HOW TO MANAGE IT

1. LIE THE PATIENT FLAT
2. REFER URGENTLY TO ONCOLOGY OR ORTHOPAEDICS!
3. ANALGESIA
4. DEXAMETHASONE ORAL 8MG IF KNOWN SPINAL MALIGNANCY
5. MRI SPINE WITHIN 24 HOURS

