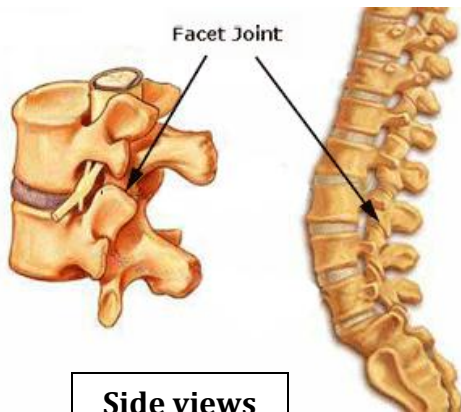


The Lumbar Facet Syndrome

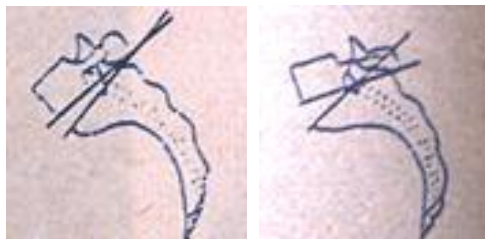
Dockery Chiropractic
518-891-1140
www.dockerychiro.com



Side views

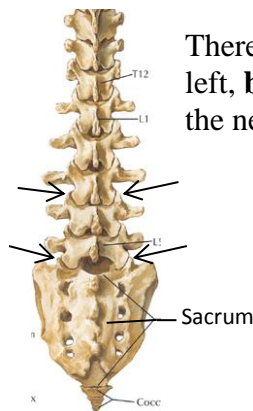
Pain from the **Lumbar Facet Syndrome** can be unilateral or bilateral, can be sharp but more often is an intense ache. The pain can radiate into the hip, thigh and hamstring, rarely traveling below the knee.

The **facet joints** of the spine form where a descending appendage of one vertebra above overlaps an ascending appendage of the vertebrae below, locking the vertebrae together. In normal movement when you bend forward the upper surface glides forward over the bottom surface, stretching the joint, and when you bend backwards the upper surface extends backward, jamming the joint.



Normal Angle

Increased Angle (Facet Syndrome)



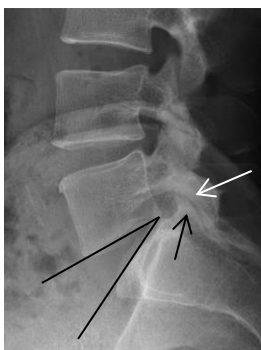
Back view

There are **two facet joints**, one on the right and one on the left, **between every vertebra** from the second vertebra in the neck down to the sacrum. (See arrows)

Pregnancy will cause a temporary sway in the low back, increasing through the pregnancy, and creating a facet syndrome.



The **Facet Syndrome** occurs when the superior surface of the joint extends too far back, jamming the joint, as when you lean back. This chronic jamming will eventually cause pain due to the stress on the capsular ligament that holds each joint together.



Increased 5th lumbar/sacrum angle, jamming the facet joints. (Facet Syndrome)

This x-ray shows a 5th lumbar vertebra extending too far backward and causing a jammed joint between the 5th lumbar and the sacrum (**facet syndrome – white arrow**). This renders the joint susceptible to **inflammation, pain, and degeneration (arthritis)**. This 38 year old male is already exhibiting early calcium buildup along the joint surfaces in response to the stress that facet syndrome causes (**arthritis – black arrow**).

Solution

Due to the chronic nature of facet syndrome the most effective way to relieve pain and discourage degeneration is to manage the condition with a regular stretch routine and regular chiropractic adjustments.

Our Dockery Chiropractic website, www.dockerychiro.com, has a stretch video that if followed regularly will help discourage joint degeneration and the chronic pain associated with facet syndrome.

Dr. Dockery recommends monthly chiropractic checkups to help manage the facet syndrome and, additionally, to keep your nervous system free of interference from the impinging effects of spinal misalignment (**subluxation**).