

Typically, the **body** of a cervical vertebra is relatively small, broad, and features convex anterior and flat or slightly concave posterior surfaces whose central part has many vascular foramina. The saddle-shaped superior surface has flange-like unciniate (neurocentral) processes that arise from the lateral margins and articulate with reciprocally-shaped facets on the inferior surface of the vertebra above at the uncovertebral joints (of Luschka). The inferior concave surface has a broad inferiorly orientated projection that arises from the anterior margin. The convexity and concavity of the vertebral body allows considerable flexion and extension but lateral flexion is partially limited by the unciniate processes. The unciniate processes are believed to prevent postero-lateral intervertebral disc herniations.

To the superior and inferior margins of the anterior and posterior surfaces of the vertebral bodies attach the anterior and posterior **longitudinal ligaments**, respectively; longus colli (vertical part) attaches to shallow antero-lateral depressions. The superior and inferior surfaces are parallel and have a thin covering of hyaline cartilage, the 'vertebral end-plates', to which the adjacent **intervertebral discs** are attached, except at the lateral margins where the small synovial uncovertebral joints (of Luschka) are located.