

The body of a typical lumbar vertebra is stout and kidney-shaped, concave posteriorly and wider transversely than antero-posteriorly. 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. The posterior surface has vascular foramina. The anterior and posterior longitudinal ligaments attach to the discal margins anteriorly and posteriorly, respectively. Lateral to the anterior ligament are attached the crura of the diaphragm. Psoas major attaches postero-laterally to the upper and lower margins.