

The ligamentum flava connects the laminae of adjacent vertebrae. The first arises at C1/C2 and the last at the level of L4/L5 (L5/S1 in a lumbarized sacrum). They pass postero-inferiorly from the anterior aspect of the inferior border of the laminae above to the posterior aspect of the superior border of the laminae below. Laterally, the ligaments extend as far as the zygapophyseal joint capsules. Medially, their borders meet at the root of the spinous process and may be partially fused leaving gaps for the passage of veins connecting the internal and posterior external vertebral venous plexus.

The predominant tissue is yellow elastic tissue to permit and control spinal flexion and prevent abrupt limitation, they also aid the return to the erect posture and prevent redundant folds projecting into the vertebral foramen. The ligaments are broad, thin and long in the cervical region, becoming thicker as they descend the vertebral column.