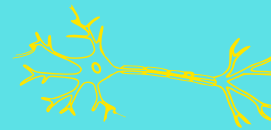




**MEDICAL
EMERGENCY**



CAUDA EQUINA



Caused by space occupying lesions in the lumbosacral canal:

- Herniation
- Spinal Stenosis
- Tumours and trauma
- Spinal infection
- Ankylosing spondylitis (arthritis of the spine)
- Epidural haematoma (collection of blood around spine)

Note that the last spinal root is in the lumbar region exits the spinal chord at the L1/L2 level
 Cauda equina - lumbar nerve roots

Compression of the terminal spinal root at the lumbosacral region.

Treatment - surgical decompression within 48 hours of symptom onset



Presents as:

- Back pain
- Bilateral leg pain
- Incontinence
- Painless urinary retention
- Saddle anaesthesia
- Erectile dysfunction

If missed:

- Chronic neuropathic pain
- Intermittent self-catheterisation required
- Fecal incontinence - manual rectal evacuation required
- Loss of sensation and lower limb weakness
- Impotence