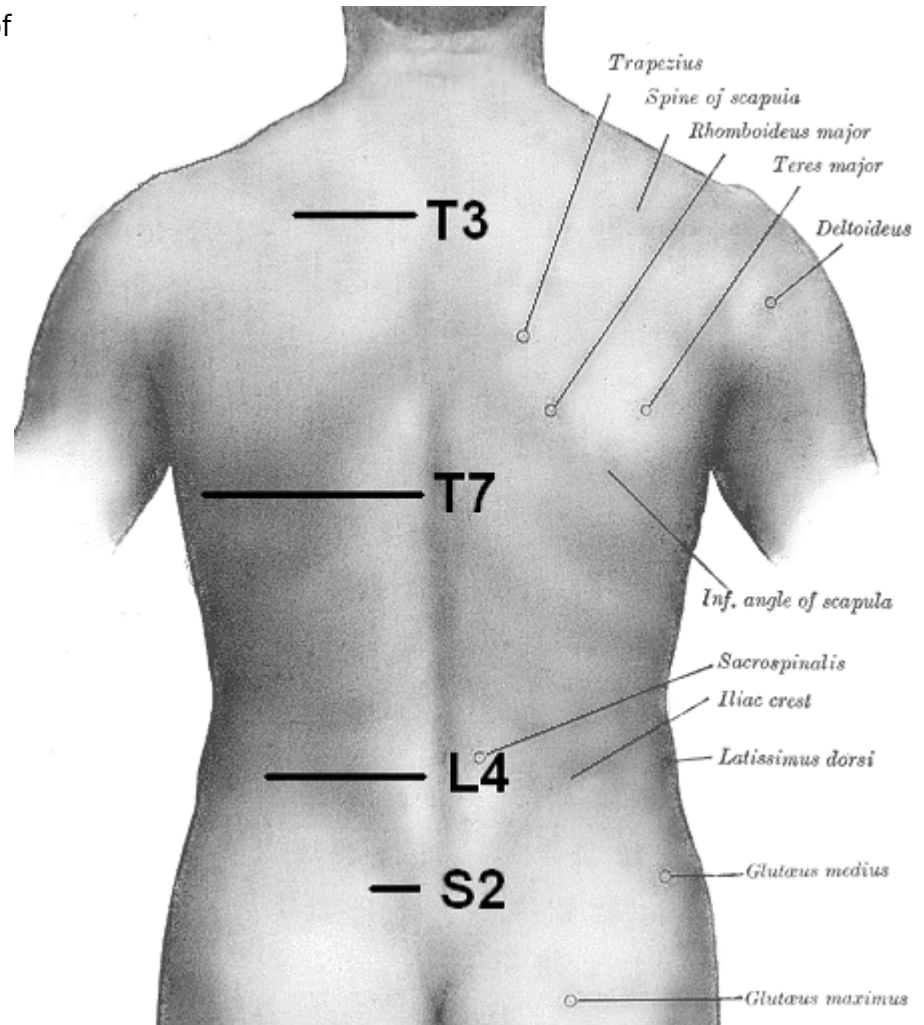


Thoracic spine

Composes the middle segment of the [vertebral column](#), between the cervical vertebrae and the lumbar vertebrae.



In humans, there are twelve thoracic vertebrae and they are intermediate in size between those of the cervical and lumbar regions; they increase in size as one proceeds down the spine, the upper vertebrae being much smaller than those in the lower part of the region. They are distinguished by the presence of facets on the sides of the bodies for articulation with the heads of the ribs, and facets on the transverse processes of all, except the eleventh and twelfth, for articulation with the tubercles of the ribs. By convention, the human thoracic vertebrae are numbered, with the first one (T1) located closest to the skull and higher numbered vertebrae (T2-T12) proceeding away from the skull and down the spine.

The thoracic spine and sacrum exhibit [kyphosis](#) which is present at birth, while the cervical and lumbar spine exhibit fully developed [lordosis](#) around puberty.

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