

[J Cont Med A Dent. 2014 Jan-Apr; 2\(1\): 69-72.](#)

Early Ossification of Anterior Longitudinal Ligament: A Case Report

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.18049/jcmad/229a15>

Abstract

Ossification of the anterior longitudinal ligament (OALL) has not been widely described since it is rarely symptomatic. The ossification and or calcification of the spinal ligaments have been considered as a part of diffuse idiopathic skeletal hyperostosis, previously known as Forestier's disease. It is defined as a diffuse idiopathic skeletal hyperostosis as showing calcification or ossification along the anterior to anterolateral aspect of four contiguous vertebral bodies with relative preservation of the height of the intervertebral disc in the affected areas, distinguishing it from degenerative discogenic disease. Neurological complications from OALL are rare. It typically affects males over 60 years of age. In this case report, early ossification of anterior longitudinal ligament was observed during routine skeleton examination of medico-legal case. The bones were of human male of about 25 to 30 year of age. The anterior longitudinal ligament over lower four thoracic vertebrae were fully ossified. This early complete ossification of the anterior longitudinal ligament signifies either malignancy or metabolic disorders. So, the knowledge of this anatomic variation would be helpful for early detection of different pathological conditions.