

**THE STRUCTURAL AND FUNCTIONAL ORGANISATION OF THE LIGAMENTUM NUCHAE,
THE INTERSPINOUS AND INTERLAMINAR LIGAMENTS OF SHEEP, WITH SPECIAL
REFERENCE TO POSTURAL AND LOCOMOTOR ADAPTATION**

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A REVIEW PAPER IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF BSc - ANATOMY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF
NAIROBI, 1985/86.

SUMMARY

Ligamentum nuchae, interspinous and interlaminar ligaments have been studied by gross dissection and light microscopy. It has been found that the ligamentum nuchae arises from the external occipital protuberance and runs close to the tips of the spinous processes to merge imperceptibly with thoraco-lumbar fascia in the lumbar region. Histologically, it is largely elastic with relatively less collagen. The interspinous ligament, largely elastic, is thin and transparent in the thoracic region and a little more definite in the lumbar region. The interlaminar ligament has two parts in the cervical region, namely an inner elastic and an outer collagenous, is fibro-elastic in the cranial thoracic region and predominantly elastic in caudal thoracic and lumbar regions. It is inferred here that the elasticity of these ligaments is an adaptation to the increased flexibility of the vertebral column required in quadrupedalism and not purely an adaptation to upright posture as suggested by FASANA (1973).