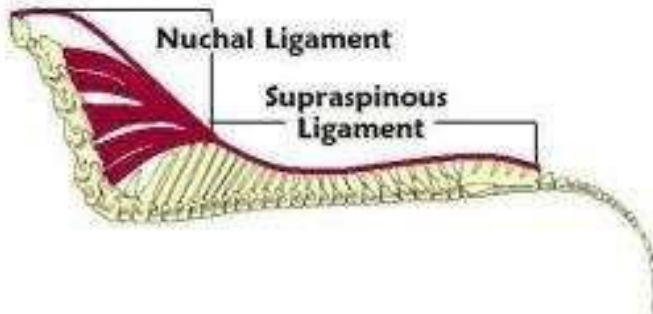


## Snippet 1: Essential Ligaments

Knowledge of the Ring of Ligaments and muscles that envelop the horse's body is absolutely necessary to understand how to train a horse for success in any given equestrian discipline.



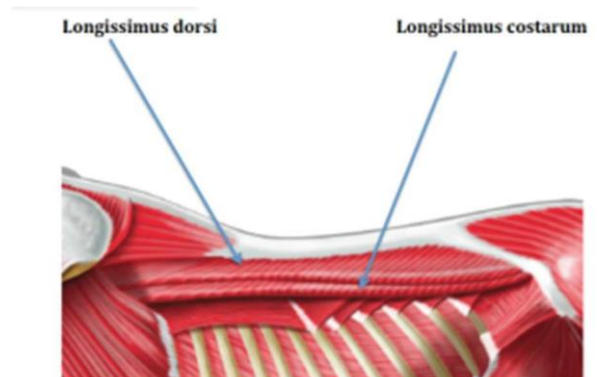
This picture gives us the starting point at the poll where the Nuchal (pronounced nukal) ligament is attached to the first of the 7 cervical vertebrae. It also is attached by ligaments draping down along both sides of the neck to each of those seven vertebrae.

The Nuchal ligament continues from poll and over the fulcrum of the withers where it blends into and becomes known as the Supraspinous

ligament. This ligament continues to the point of the croup. These two major ligaments are two of the 3 parts of the dorsal or top line ligaments.

When the head and neck of the horse are stretched forward and downward, the back is raised by these topline ligaments. This is how and where the horse carries the saddle and the rider.

When the back is raised, this allows the longissimus back muscles to work in relaxation and remain free yet actively engaged. "Classical masters described the raised poll of collection as being moved both Forward and Upward, using the phrase that 'the horse pushes with his forehead' to describe this action." (From Dressage Riders Atlas, by Nancy Nicholson, PhD)



Other references: Tug of War by Gerd Heuschmann and Balance Gaits and Movement by Susan Harri