

3. The more flexible structure might make the organism more flexible. However, the structure might not provide as much support or protection from injury.

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1. The spinal column and vertebrae protect the spinal cord and the nerves that allow communication between the body and the brain.
2. The organism might find it harder to bend or move, and the spinal cord could be more vulnerable to injury.



1. What is the purpose of the spinal column and vertebrae?
2. If an organism's spinal column becomes less flexible, what might happen to the organism?
3. Organisms such as sea cucumbers and sea urchins have spine-like structures that are more flexible than a spinal column. What might be an advantage and a disadvantage of such structures?