

Answers

The skeleton holds the body erect and protects the main organs including the heart, the lungs and the liver. It includes the skull, the spine, the rib cage and the sternum.

The spine is also known as the vertebral column and is a flexible column made up of 33 vertebrae or bones. It can be divided into five regions. The neck is the cervical region which supports the skull. The next section is the thoracic section which helps to protect the chest, with the ribs. The third section in the lower back is the lumbar section. The next section is the sacrum which has five vertebrae fused to a triangular bone and makes up part of the hip. The final section is the coccyx. The vertebrae are all different in size, the ones in the cervical area are the smallest and those in the lumbar area are the thickest. The vertebrae are protected with disks or cartilage pads to absorb shock.

The thorax is the rib cage which has twelve pairs of ribs, all joined to the vertebrae. The first seven pairs are joined to the sternum, the next three pairs are attached to each other and the last two pairs are attached to the abdominal wall.