

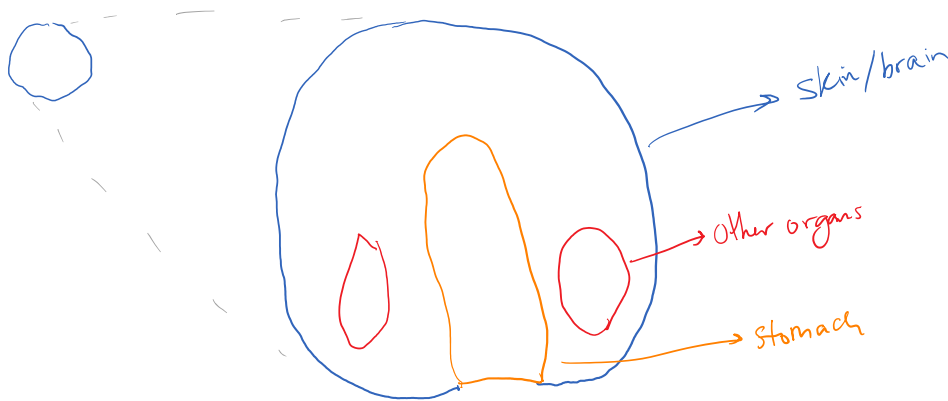
How can a baby be born with a humped back?

Friday, March 17, 2017 02:46 PM

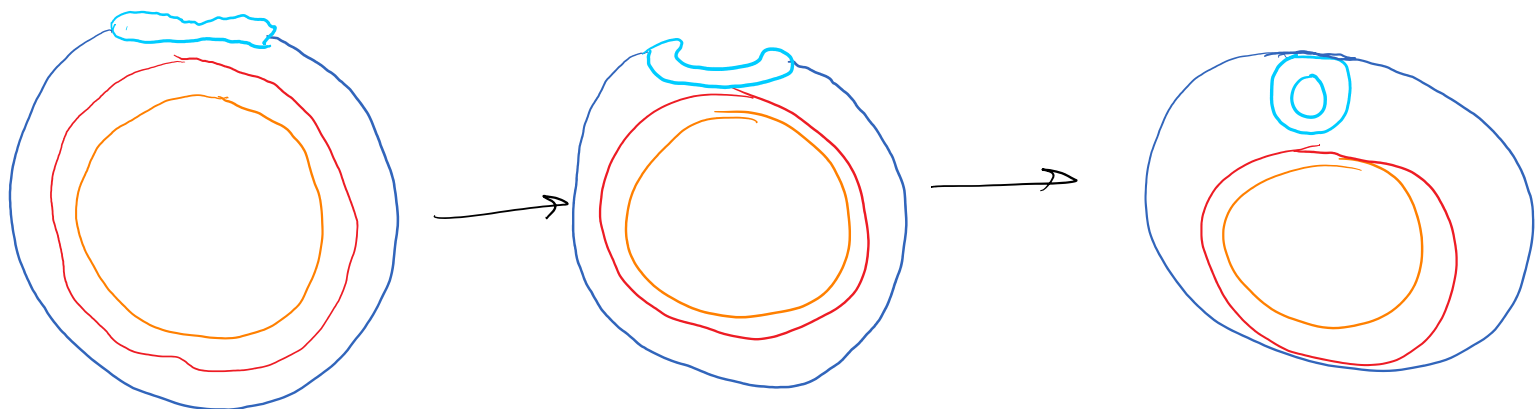
To be honest, I don't know a lot about babies born with hunched backs, but I do know a lot about spinal bifida, which is very similar. In spinal bifida, the baby is born with a large bump on her back or behind her head. While in the womb, the baby goes through several stages of development; first it is an egg, which is a single cell that divides into many cells known as a zygote.



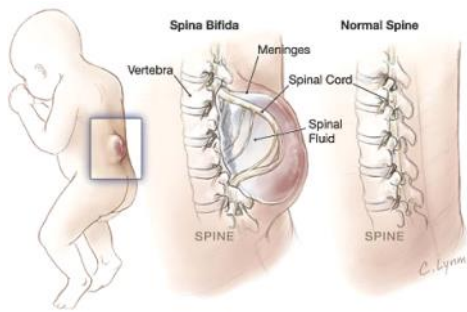
This zygote divides continuously, producing hundreds of cells that will eventually become different organs (such as the liver or kidney). This stage is referred to as the **gastrula** stage. You might not be able to tell by looking at it, but a lot of these cells have already decided what kind of tissue they will turn into:



Eventually, the cells that turn into your brain and spinal cord have to do something very special called **neural tube closure**. If it works correctly, these cells will fold inwards, fuse together, and create a tube that eventually develops into your entire brain and spinal cord!:



In spinal bifida, the neural tube doesn't close fully. This can be caused by a number of things, like the lack of a certain vitamin during pregnancy. As the embryo develops, the gap in the spinal cord remains open, creating a bump in the skin caused by the spinal fluid:



Nowadays, surgeons can fix spinal bifida with surgery.