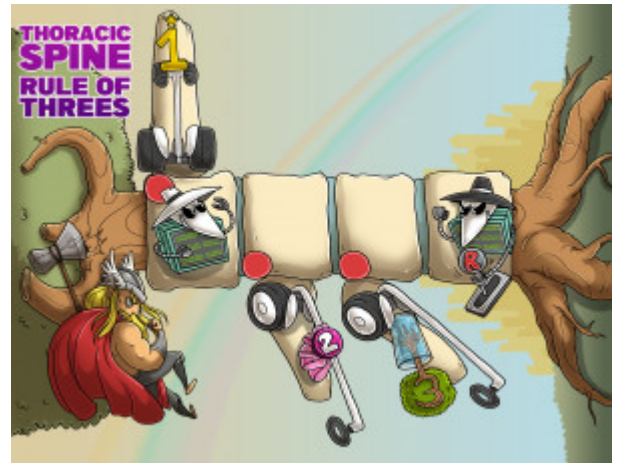


## Thoracic Spine Rule of Threes

The Thoracic Spine Rule of Threes is a simple tool to help physicians locate and identify the thoracic vertebrae's spinous and bilateral transverse processes. The T-Spine can be broken down into four segments, T1-T3, T4-T6, T7-T9, and T10-T12. Each group will follow a different pattern to help palpate and localize the corresponding bony landmarks.



PLAY PICMONIC

### Spinous Process

#### [Spy-nose Processor](#)

The spinous processes of the thoracic spine point increasingly downward from T1-T9 and then slowly return back into a horizontal position from T10-T12. To help physicians identify which corresponding vertebrae and transverse process is being palpated, we use the Rule of Threes.

#### Rule 1

##### Rule 1: Same Segment

###### [\(1\) Wand Same Segway](#)

The first rule states that the spinous processes for T1-T3 are located at the same level of the corresponding transverse process. For example, if a physician palpates the T3 spinous process, then they are directly in line with the bilateral T3 transverse processes.

#### Rule 2

##### Rule 2: Half Segment Below

###### [\(2\) Tutu Half Segway Below](#)

The second rule states that the spinous processes for T4-T6 are located at a one half segment below of the corresponding transverse process. For example, if a physician palpates the T5 spinous process, then they are a half segment below the bilateral T5 transverse processes. To locate the T5 transverse process, they should palpate a half segment above and move laterally along the spine.

#### Rule 3

##### Rule 3: Full Segment Below

###### [\(3\) Tree Full-glass Segway Below](#)

The third rule states that the spinous processes for T7-T9 are located one full segment below of the corresponding transverse process. For example, if a physician palpates the T8 spinous process, then they are a one segment below the bilateral T8 transverse processes. To locate the T8 transverse process, they should palpate one segment above and move laterally along the spine.

## Reverse It

### Reversing

For the final thoracic vertebral spinous processes, we reverse the three rules for each subsequent segment. For T10, we follow Rule 3 (same as T7-T9). For T11, we follow Rule 2 (same as T6-T4). For T12, we follow Rule 1 (same as T1-T3).