AO Spine Subaxial Classification System

**Algorithm for morphologic classification**

**Type A** Compression Injuries

- A0 Minor, nonstructural fractures
  - No bony injury or minor injury such as an isolated lamina fracture or spinous process fracture.

- A1 Wedge-compression
  - Compression fracture involving a single endplate without involvement of the posterior wall of the vertebral body.

- A2 Split coronal split or pincer fracture involving both endplates without involvement of the posterior wall of the vertebral body.

- A3 Incomplete burst
  - Burst fracture involving a single endplate without involvement of the posterior wall of the vertebral body.

- A4 Complete burst
  - Burst fracture or sagittal split involving both endplates.

**Type B** Tension Band Injuries

- B1 Posterior tension band injury (bony)
  - Physical separation through fractured bony structures only.

- B2 Posterior tension band injury (bony capsuloligamentous, ligamentous)
  - Complete disruption of the posterior capsuloligamentous or bony capsuloligamentous structures together with a vertebral body, disk, and/or facet injury.

- B3 Anterior tension band injury
  - Physical disruption or separation of the anterior structures (bone/disk) with tethering of the posterior elements.

**Type C** Translation Injuries

- C Translational injury in any axis-displacement or translation of one vertebral body relative to another in any direction.

**Type F** Facet Injuries

- F Nondisplaced facet fracture
  - With fragment <1cm in height, <40% of lateral mass.

- F2 Facet fracture with potential for instability
  - With fragment >1cm, > than 40% lateral mass, or displaced.

- F3 Floating lateral mass

- F4 Pathologic subluxation or perched/dislocated facet

**Classification Nomenclature**

- C6-C7 translation injury (C) with a C0 compression fracture (A)

**Neurology**

- C6-C7: A8
  - Primary injury
- C6-C7: B2*
  - Secondary injury

**Modifiers**

- M1 Posterior Capsuloligamentous Complex Injury without complete disruption
- M2 Critical disk herniation
- M3 Spondylopathies (spondylolisthesis, spondylolysis)
- M4 Vertebral artery abnormality

**Further information:**

www.aospine.org/classification