Abstract: In one embodiment, a spinal stabilization apparatus includes a vertebral anchor having a head portion 28 and a bone attachment portion 30. An elongate flexible guide 18 is removably coupled to the head portion 28 of the vertebral anchor 12 and has a channel 40 extending longitudinally thereof and communicating with a slot 32 in the head portion 28 of the anchor 12. An elongate cord 26 may be received within the channel 40 to facilitate inserting and securing a spacer 24 between pairs of anchors 12 installed into adjacent vertebrae of a person's spine.

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