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The Ottawa Senators are being forced to move forward without one of their top blueliners.

Filip Kuba underwent surgery in Los Angeles on Tuesday night to repair a herniated disc in his back and Senators general manager Bryan Murray confirmed earlier today that the veteran defenceman will be sidelined for the first round of the Stanley Cup playoffs.

"We suspect he's out for the next four weeks, at least," said Murray. "(It looks like) we certainly have to get into the second round, at this point in time, for him to be available to us at all. But let's hope that's the case and somewhere down the line, it would be a nice addition to have if we go deep into the playoffs."

Kuba, who's suited up only once in the last 15 games for the Senators, had tried rehabbing the injury, suffered during the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics. But in the end, the 33-year-old Czech Republic native decided surgery was necessary to relieve the pain in his lower back. Back specialist Dr. Robert Watkins performed the procedure.

"He was a little bit sore earlier in the year, but it looked like everything was fine," said Murray. "But (Kuba took) a hit in Olympics — from what he told me, in the game against Finland — and from that point on, he had a difficult time playing.

"The decision, at the end of the day, was that he was having a fair amount of pain that was a factor as far as a pinched nerve in his back. (Kuba) just felt that surgery was the right thing to do at this time. We have to look after our players and we decided to make sure that happened for him."

With Kuba on the shelf, the Senators will look toward Brian Lee as their seventh defenceman, behind the pairings of Chris Phillips-Anton Volchenkov, Andy Sutton-Erik Karlsson and Chris Campoli-Matt Carkner. Last year's top draft pick, Jared Cowen, is also with the team, now that his Spokane Chiefs have been eliminated from the Western Hockey League playoffs.

"We probably have one more recall from Binghamton that we'll make when their season is over," said Murray. "If they don't make the (American Hockey League) playoffs, that's easy. If they do make the playoffs, we'll just have callup as necessary.

"It's unfortunate for Filip because we like him and we think he adds a lot to our hockey team. But it's a fact (of life) in our business — you have to play without certain players because of injury and in this case, we have to play without him."