Vascular anatomy of the upper limb
Musculoskeletal Block - Lecture 8

Objective:
✓ Identity the origin of vascular supply for the upper limb
✓ Describe the main arteries and their branches of the arm, forearm & hand
✓ Describe the vascular arches for the hand.
✓ Describe the superficial and deep veins of the upper limb

Color index:
Important
In male’s slides only
In female’s slides only
Extra information, explanation

Contact us: Anatomy439@gmail.com
Arteries of the upper limb

1- the subclavian artery

- The left subclavian artery originates from the arch of the aorta.
- The right subclavian artery originates from the brachiocephalic artery.
- Both continue as axillary artery at the lateral (outer) border of the 1st rib.

2- the axillary artery

- Begins at the lateral border of the 1st rib as continuation of the subclavian artery.
- Continues as brachial artery at lower border of teres major muscle.
  - It’s closely related to the cords of brachial plexus and their branches.
  - It’s enclosed within the axillary sheath. (axillary sheath is a fibrous sheath that encloses the axillary artery and the three cords of the brachial plexus to form the neurovascular bundle.)
  - It’s crossed anteriorly by the pectoralis minor muscle, and is divided into three parts: 1st, 2nd & 3rd.

The 1st part
- Extends from the lateral border of 1st rib to upper border of the pectoralis minor muscle.
  - Related: Anteriorly to the pectoralis major muscle.
  - Laterally to the cords of the brachial plexus.
  - It gives: ONE branch: Highest thoracic artery

The 2nd part
- Lies behind the pectoralis minor muscle.
  - It is related: Medially, laterally, and posteriorly to the corresponding cord of the brachial plexus.
  - It gives: TWO branches
  1-Thoracoacromial
  2-Lateral thoracic

The 3rd part
- Extends from the lower border of pectoralis minor muscle to the lower border of teres major muscle.
  - Related: Medially, laterally, and posteriorly to the branches of the cords of the brachial plexus.
  - It gives: THREE branches
  1-Anterior circumflex humeral
  2-Posterolateral circumflex humeral
  3-Subscapular
Anastomosis around shoulder joint

Anastomosis occurs between branches of **Subclavian** and **Axillary** arteries

**Branches from Subclavian**
- Suprascapular artery
- Transverse cervical artery

**Branches from axillary**
- Subscapular artery
- Anterior circumflex humeral artery
- Posterior circumflex humeral artery

3- the brachial artery

**Branches**
1. Muscular.
2. Nutrient to humerus.
3. Profunda brachii
4. Superior ulnar collateral
5. Inferior ulnar collateral.

- Is a continuation of the **axillary artery** at the lower border of teres major muscle.
- Provides main arterial supply to the arm.
- **Terminates** opposite **Neck of Radius** by dividing into **Radial & Ulnar** arteries.

**Relations**
1. **Anteriorly**: crossed from above downward by medial cutaneous nerve of the forearm, median nerve, and bicipital aponeurosis.
2. **Posteriorly**: triceps, coracobrachialis, and brachialis.
3. **Medially**: basilic vein, ulnar, and median nerves.
4. **Laterally**: coracobrachialis and biceps muscles.
4- The ulnar artery

**Ulnar artery**

- The larger of the two terminal branches of the brachial artery.
- Begins in the cubital fossa at the level of neck of radius.
- Descends through the anterior compartment of the forearm.
- Enters the palm, in front of the flexor retinaculum, with the ulnar nerve.
- Ends by forming the superficial palmer arch, by anastomosing with superficial palmer branch of radial artery.

**Branches**

- Muscular
- Recurrent branch (for anastomosis around the elbow joint).
- Common Interosseous artery, which gives: (Anterior and Posterior) Interosseous arteries.
- Branch to anastomoses around the wrist joint.

5- The Radial artery

**Radial artery**

- The smaller of the two terminal branches of the brachial artery.
- Begins in the cubital fossa at the level of neck of radius.
- Descends downward and laterally.
- Leaves the forearm by winding around the lateral aspect of the wrist to reach the dorsum of the hand.

**Branches**

- Muscular
- Recurrent branch (for anastomosis around the elbow joint).
- Superficial palmar branch, joins the ulnar artery to form the superficial palmar arch.
Anastomosis around Elbow Joint

Arteries of the palm

Anastomosis occurs between branches of **Brachial, Radial and Ulnar arteries**
Around the epicondyle of humerus (medial & lateral)

- **Branches from Brachial artery:**
  - Profunda Brachii artery
  - Superior ulnar collateral artery
  - Inferior ulnar collateral artery

- **Branches from Ulnar and Radial Arteries:**
  - Radial & ulnar recurrent arteries
  - Posterior Interosseous recurrent artery (from ulnar)

-Arteries of the palm

**Radial arteries**

- Leaves dorsum of the hand by **turning forward** between the proximal ends of the 1st and 2nd metacarpal bones, and between two heads of the 1st dorsal interosseous muscle. This place called anatomical snuff box.

- On entering the palm it continues as deep palmar arch.

- Gives; arteria *radialis indices* and arteria *princeps pollicis*.

**Ulnar arteries**

- Enters the hand:
  - **anterior** to the flexor retinaculum
  - on the **lateral** side of the ulnar nerve and pisiform bone
    - Gives a **deep branch**

  Continue as the **superficial palmar arch**.
**The superficial palmar arch**

- Is the direct continuation of the **ulnar artery**, as it curves laterally behind the palmar aponeurosis.
- Is completed by **branch from the radial artery**.
- Lies approximately at the level of the **Distal Border of the Extended Thumb**.

Gives: **digital arteries** from its convexity to supply the fingers.

**The deep palmar arch**

- Is a continuation of the **radial artery** as it curves medially beneath long flexor tendons, in front of the metacarpal bones and interosseous muscles.
- Is completed on the medial side by **deep branch of ulnar artery**.
- Lies at a level of the **Proximal Border of Extended thumb**.

It sends branches:
1. **superiorly** to share in anastomosis around the wrist joint
2. **inferiorly** to join branches of the superficial palmar arch.

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**Arterial Innervation And Raynaud's Disease**

→ **Raynaud's disease** is a vasospastic disease involves digital arteries.

It may require **Cervicodorsal preganglionic sympathectomy**, to prevent **necrosis of the fingers**.
- The veins of the upper limb are divided into two sets: **Superficial** and **Deep**

- The two sets anastomose frequently with each other

### The deep veins

- Accompany the arteries, and constitute the *venae comitantes* of those vessels.

### The superficial veins

- Placed immediately beneath the skin, in the *superficial fascia*

#### Axillary

- **Cephalic**
- **Basilic**
- **Median cubital**

Note: we study the veins from distal to proximal because they return the blood back to the heart

### Superficial Veins

- The **dorsal digital veins** drain into **dorsal metacarpal veins**, which unite to form a **dorsal venous arch or network**.

- Dorsal venous network lies on the dorsum of the hand, in the subcutaneous tissue, proximal to the metacarpophalangeal joints.

- Drains into the **cephalic vein** laterally, and **basilic vein** medially.

#### Cephalic

- Arises from the *lateral end* of the dorsal venous arch of hand
- Ascends on the *radial side* of the forearm to the elbow and continues up to the arm in the deltopectoral groove.
- It pierces the clavipectoral fascia to drain into the **axillary vein**.

#### Basilic

- Arises from the *medial side* of the dorsal venous arch of hand
- Ascends on the *ulnar side* of the forearm to the elbow.
- In the middle of the arm it pierces the deep fascia and joins the brachial vein or axillary vein.

#### Median cubital

- Links **cephalic vein** and **basilic vein** in the cubital fossa.
- Is a frequent site for venipuncture.
-**Deep Veins**: Accompany the arteries of the same region and bear similar names.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vena comitantes</th>
<th>brachial vein</th>
<th>Axillary vein</th>
<th>Subclavian vein</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They are generally arranged in <strong>pairs</strong>.</td>
<td>Placed one on either side of the <strong>brachial artery</strong>.</td>
<td>Begins at the <strong>lower border of the Teres major</strong>, as the continuation of the basilic vein.</td>
<td>Is the continuation of the <strong>axillary vein</strong>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Situated one on either side of the corresponding artery, connected at intervals by short transverse branches.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ends at the <strong>outer border of the first rib</strong> as the subclavian vein.</td>
<td>Extends from the <strong>outer border</strong> of the first rib to the <strong>sternal end of the clavicle</strong>, where it unites with the internal jugular to form the Brachiocephalic (Innominate) vein.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The superficial and deep palmar arterial arches are each accompanied by a pair of <strong>venae comitantes</strong> which: A- constitute the <strong>superficial and deep palmar venous arches</strong>. B- receive the veins corresponding to the branches of the arterial arches.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Receives: 1- <strong>The brachial veins</strong>. 2- <strong>The cephalic vein</strong> (close to its termination).</td>
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<td>The <strong>deep veins of the forearm</strong> are the <strong>venae comitantes</strong> of the radial and ulnar arteries.</td>
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**Vein Catheterization**

- The **Basilic vein** is the vein of choice for central venous catheterization. (قسمة) Because:

  From the cubital fossa until reaching the axillary vein it **increases** in diameter and lies in direct line with the axillary vein. Abduction of the arm will overcome the troublesome caused by the valves in the axillary vein, and permits the catheter to move past the obstruction.

- While the **Cephalic vein**: does not increase in size as it ascends in the arm, and frequently divides into small branches. At its termination it joins the axillary vein at right angle, **so it is difficult to maneuver the catheter around this angle**.
Q1: where does the axillary artery begin?
A. Medial border of the 1st rib
B. Lateral border of the 1st rib
C. Lateral border of the 2nd rib
D. Medial border of the 2nd rib

Q2: One of the branches of the 3rd part in axillary artery is
A. Anterior circumflex humeral
B. Thoracoacromial
C. Highest thoracic Artery
D. Lateral thoracic.

Q3: the axillary artery is a continuation of
A. Axillary artery
B. Subclavian artery
C. Subscapular artery
D. Radial artery

Q4: One of the branches in the brachial artery is
A. Highest thoracic Artery
B. Radial artery
C. Lateral thoracic
D. Profunda brachii

Q5: where does the ulnar artery begin?
A. Radial tuberosity of radius
B. Neck of the radius
C. Olecranon fossa of humerus
D. Fibula

Q6: what's the smallest terminal branches of the brachial artery?
A. Radial artery
B. Ulnar artery
C. Axillary artery
D. Subscapular artery

Q7: The deep palmar arch is more proximal than
A. Superficial palmar arch
B. Ulnar artery
C. Radial artery
D. Brachial artery

Q8: Which is the vein of choice for injection
A. Basilic
B. Cephalic
C. Median cubital
D. Axillary

Q9: which one of the following links cephalic vein and basilic vein in the cubital fossa?
A. Median vein
B. Brachial vein
C. Median cubital vein
D. Radial vein

Q10: Cephalic vein pierces:
A. Clavipectoral fascia
B. Deep fascia
C. Deltopectoral groove
D. Venae comitantes

Q11: it begins at the lower border of the Teres major, as the continuation of the basilic vein:
A. Subclavian vein
B. Axillary vein
C. Subclavian artery
D. Axillary artery

Q12: Choose the correct about the basilic vein?
A. Lies in indirect line with the axillary vein
B. Ascends on the radial side
C. Ascends on the ulnar side
D. Both A&B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q1</th>
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SAQs

Q1: How many parts does the Axillary artery have? Explain each part

Q2: What's the branches of radial artery

Q3: Name two arteries of the palm?

Q4: What arteries are affected by Raynaud's disease?

1) The Axillary artery is divided into three parts: 1st, 2nd, and 3rd parts.

2) The 1st part extends from the lateral border of the 1st rib to the upper border of the pectoralis minor muscle. It gives:
   - One branch: Highest thoracic artery.

3) The 2nd part lies behind the pectoralis minor muscle. It gives:
   - Thoracoacromial.
   - Subscapular.
   - Muscular.

4) The 3rd part extends from the lower border of the pectoralis minor muscle to the lower border of the teres major muscle. It gives:
   - Anterior circumflex humeral.
   - Posterior circumflex humeral.
   - One branch: Highest thoracic.

5) The ulnar and radial arteries

6) The ulnar artery joins the ulna artery to form the ulnar arch.

7) The radial artery gives:
   - Recurrent branch (for anastomosis around the elbow joint).
   - Superficial palmar branch, joins the ulnar artery to form the superficial palmar arch.

8) Digital arteries: