

STRUCTURE OF THE HUMAN BODY

2008

Vertebral Levels

Landmarks and internal structures found at various vertebral levels.

Vertebral Level	Landmark	Internal Significance
C3	Hyoid bone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bifurcation of common carotid artery.
C4	Superior border of thyroid cartilage	
C6	Cricoid cartilage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larynx ends; trachea begins • Pharynx ends; esophagus begins • Inferior thyroid A crosses posterior to carotid sheath. • Middle cervical sympathetic ganglion behind inf. thyroid a. • Inferior laryngeal nerve enters the larynx. • Vertebral a. enters the transverse. Foramen of C 6.
C7	Vertebra prominens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thoracic duct reaches its greatest height • Isthmus of thyroid gland
T1	Sternoclavicular joint (it is a finger's breadth below the bismuth of the thyroid gland)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest point of apex of lung.
T1-2	Superior angle of the scapula	
T2	Jugular notch	
T3	Base of spine of scapula	
T4	Sternal angle (of Louis)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Division between superior and inferior mediastinum • Ascending aorta ends • Arch of aorta begins & ends. • Trachea ends; primary bronchi begin
T5-9	Body of sternum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heart

T7	Inferior angle of scapula	
T8		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inferior vena cava passes through diaphragm
T9	Xiphisternal junction	
T9-L3	Costal margin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costal slips of diaphragm
T10		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Esophagus through diaphragm
T12		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aorta through diaphragm Thoracic duct through diaphragm Azygos V. through diaphragm
L1	Tran pyloric plane: Found at the midpoint between the jugular notch and the pubic symphysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pylorus of stomach immediately above and to the right of the midline. Duodenojejunal flexure to the left of midline and immediately below it Pancreas on a line with it Origin of Superior Mesenteric artery Hilum of kidneys: left is above and right is below. Celiac a. originates just above and renal arteries originate just below this line.
L2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thoracic duct begins Azygos and hemiazygos begin
L4/L5	Iliac crest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aorta bifurcates into common iliac arteries Inferior vena cava formed from common iliac veins
S2	Posterior superior iliac spine (dimple)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End of dural sac Middle of sacroiliac joint
S3	Posterior inferior iliac spine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pelvic colon ends and rectum begins; important landmark in surgery of recto sigmoid carcinoma