

Axilla

English: *Axilla*

Latin: *Fossa axillaris*



Axilla

The axilla is the area that lies underneath the glenohumeral joint. It serves as a passageway for neurovascular and muscular structures to enter and leave the upper limb.

Boundaries of axilla

The anterior wall - pectorales major and minor.

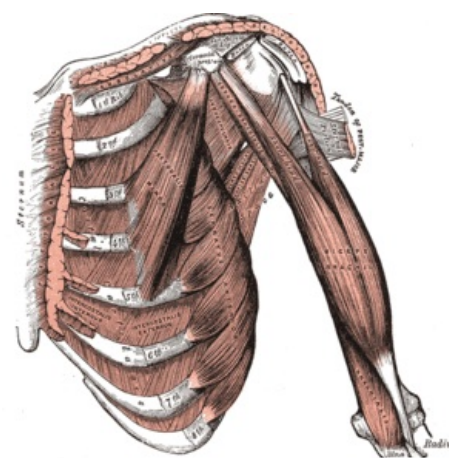
The posterior wall - subscapularis above, the teres major and latissimus dorsi below.

Medial wall - first four ribs with their corresponding intercostales, and part of the serratus anterior.

Lateral wall - humerus, the coracobrachialis, and the biceps brachii.

Apex (axillary inlet)- it is formed by lateral border of the first rib, superior border of scapula, and the posterior border of the clavicle.

The apex decreases in size when the arm is fully abducted – leaving the contents of the axilla at risk of compression.

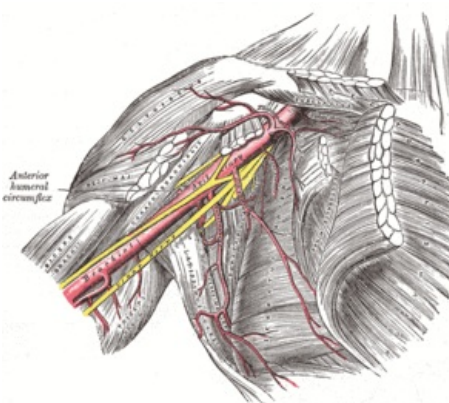


Axilla

Contents

- Axillary artery (and branches) – the main artery supplying the upper limb.
- Axillary vein (and tributaries) – the main vein draining the upper limb with cephalic and basilic veins as its tributaries.
- Brachial plexus (and branches)
- Axillary lymph nodes – drains lymphatic fluid that has drained from the upper limb and pectoral region.
- Biceps brachii (short head) and coracobrachialis

Clinical significance includes thoracic outlet syndrome, lymph node dissection for breast cancer staging diagnosis and treatment and chest drain insertion.



Content of axilla

Links

External links

- lesson3axilla (<http://home.comcast.net/~wnor/lesson3axilla.htm>) at The Anatomy Lesson by Wesley Norman (Georgetown University)
- teachmeanatomy.info/upper-limb/areas/axilla/

Bibliography

- PETROVICKY, Pavel, et al. *Anatomie s topografií a klinickými aplikacemi : Sv. 1, Pohybové ústrojí. 1.* edition. Martin : Osveta, 2001. 463 pp. ISBN 80-8063-046-1.