

# Anterolateral Transcranial Approach

The anterolateral [transcranial approaches](#) expose the [suprasellar region](#) via an anterolateral trajectory, usually through a transsylvian or unilateral subfrontal corridor. These generally include the pterional (frontotemporal), orbitozygomatic, and lateral supraorbital (frontolateral) approaches.

While all of these approaches typically use a curvilinear incision behind the hairline, the latter group of supraorbital approaches can also be performed with smaller eyebrow or eyelid incisions.

These are familiar approaches that provide a short route to the suprasellar region and are particularly useful for tumors that exhibit lateral extension into the sylvian fissure. Recently, Gerganov et al. reported excellent outcomes with an 87% rate of gross-total resection of extensive craniopharyngiomas using a more simple frontolateral craniotomy. While there are a variety of anterolateral approaches, we prefer the one-piece modified orbitozygomatic approach. This approach is a natural extension of the pterional approach which provides a more basal (inferior-to-superior) surgical trajectory, increases the corridor of exposure, shortens the distance to the target, and improves surgical freedom (maneuverability of instruments) while minimizing brain retraction <sup>1)</sup>.

<sup>1)</sup>

Liu JK, Sevak IA, Carmel PW, Eloy JA. Microscopic versus endoscopic approaches for craniopharyngiomas: choosing the optimal surgical corridor for maximizing extent of resection and complication avoidance using a personalized, tailored approach. Neurosurg Focus. 2016 Dec;41(6):E5. PubMed PMID: 27903113.

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