

Internal carotid artery C1 segment

The C1 or cervical portion (Cervical [internal carotid artery](#)).

The internal carotid artery at its origin lies lateral to the [external carotid artery](#) but as it ascends in the neck, the external carotid artery passes backward

The [cervical segment](#), or [C1](#), or cervical part of the [internal carotid artery](#), extends from the carotid bifurcation until it enters the [carotid canal](#) in the skull anterior to the [jugular foramen](#).

At its origin, the [internal carotid artery](#) is somewhat dilated. This part of the artery is known as the [carotid sinus](#) or the [carotid bulb](#). The ascending portion of the cervical segment occurs distal to the bulb, when the vessel walls are again parallel.

The internal carotid runs vertically upward in the carotid sheath, and enters the skull through the carotid canal. During this part of its course, it lies in front of the transverse processes of the upper three cervical vertebrae.

It is relatively superficial at its start, where it is contained in the carotid triangle of the neck, and lies behind and medial to the external carotid, overlapped by the sternocleidomastoid muscle, and covered by the deep fascia, the platysma, and integument: it then passes beneath the parotid gland, being crossed by the hypoglossal nerve, the digastric muscle and the stylohyoid muscle, the occipital artery and the posterior auricular artery. Higher up, it is separated from the external carotid by the styloglossus and stylopharyngeus muscles, the tip of the styloid process and the stylohyoid ligament, the glossopharyngeal nerve and the pharyngeal branch of the vagus nerve. It is in relation, behind, with the longus capitis, the superior cervical ganglion of the sympathetic trunk, and the superior laryngeal nerve; laterally, with the internal jugular vein and vagus nerve, the nerve lying on a plane posterior to the artery; medially, with the pharynx, superior laryngeal nerve, and ascending pharyngeal artery. At the base of the skull the glossopharyngeal, vagus, accessory, and hypoglossal nerves lie between the artery and the internal jugular vein.

Unlike the external carotid artery, the internal carotid normally has no branches in the neck.

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