

# Superior ophthalmic vein

The superior [ophthalmic vein](#) begins at the inner angle of the orbit in a vein named the nasofrontal which communicates anteriorly with the angular vein; it pursues the same course as the ophthalmic artery, and receives tributaries corresponding to the branches of that vessel.

Forming a short single trunk, it passes between the two heads of the Rectus lateralis and through the medial part of the superior orbital fissure, and ends in the cavernous sinus.

The ethmoidal veins drain into the superior ophthalmic vein.

Vorticose veins also drain into the superior ophthalmic vein.

## Clinical relevance

The medial angle of the eye, nose and lips (known as the danger triangle of the face) usually drain through the facial vein, via the ophthalmic vein through the cavernous sinus. As a result, an infection of the face may spread to the cavernous sinus and pterygoid venous plexus. This can lead to damage of the nerves running through the cavernous sinus.

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