

# STRUCTURE OF THE HUMAN BODY

## 2009

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

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