

An Anatomic Approach to the Lingual Artery in the Carotid Triangle in South Indian Population

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Abstract : Lingual artery is the chief artery of the tongue and the neighboring structures pertaining to the oral cavity. At the carotid triangle, this artery arises from the external carotid artery opposite to the tip of greater cornua of hyoid bone, undergoes a tortuous course with its first part being crossed by the hypoglossal nerve and runs beneath the digastric muscle. Then it continues to supply the tongue as the deep lingual artery. The aim of this study is to draw surgeon's attention to the course of lingual artery in this area since it can be accidentally lesioned causing an extensive hemorrhage in certain surgical or dental procedures. The study was conducted on 44 formalin fixed head and neck specimens focusing on the anatomic relations of lingual artery. In this study, we found that the lingual artery is located inferior to the digastric muscle and the hypoglossal nerve contradictory to the classical description. This data would be useful during ligation of lingual artery to avoid injury to the hypoglossal nerve in surgeries related to the anterior triangle of neck.

Keywords : anterior triangle, digastric muscle, hypoglossal nerve, lingual artery

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