

LYMPHATIC SYSTEM

The lymphatic system is an accessory route for transport of fluids and the substances they contain, especially proteins, coming from the tissues of the body. It acts as a complementary system of the arterial and venous systems and has its own network that transports the lymphatic fluid or lymph, back to the blood.

subclavian veins

Right and left subclavian veins channel lymph from the axillary veins of the arms. They pass below the clavicles to unite with jugular veins and then the superior vena cava through the brachiocephalic venous trunks. The subclavian veins receive the thoracic lymph duct (right) and the thoracic lymph duct (left).

great lymphatic vein

The great lymphatic vein is the thoracic duct located in the superior right area of the thorax, which receives the lymphatic vessels of the right half of the head, neck, and right upper extremity. It joins the right subclavian vein.

chyle cistern

A dilated sacular expansion in the lower part of the thoracic duct located posterior to the aorta into which the two lumbar lymphatic trunks and the intestinal trunk open.

inguinal ganglia

The inguinal area is especially rich in lymph nodes which filter the lymph coming from the inferior extremities.

lymphatic vessels

Ducts covering the entire body, closely paralleling the venous system, which collect the lymph coming from the lymphatic capillaries.

cervical nodes

Groupings of lymph nodes that filter lymphatic fluid from the head. They are located in the lateral area of the neck, in the submaxillary region, the area of the nape of the neck, the parotid region and other cervical regions.

axillary nodes

A large group of nodes located under the skin of the axilla. They filter the lymph from the superior extremity before the lymph reaches the venous blood.

lymph nodes

Thickenings of the lymphatic vessels which are distributed throughout the network. Their function is to filter the lymph and to purify it of foreign bodies. Although they exist in all areas of the body, they are more common in certain areas such as the inguinal, axillary and cervical regions.

thoracic lymph duct

A thick lymphatic duct that passes through the abdomen and the thorax vertically, parallel to the aorta, and joins the left subclavian vein near its union with the jugular vein. It collects the lymph coming from the inferior extremities, the intestine, the left half of the thorax, the left arm and half of the left side of the head.

Peyer's patch

Large aggregates of lymphoid tissue or lymph nodes found in the small intestine, which are part of the lymphatic system that helps to fight infection.

lymphatic capillaries

Small ducts similar to the venous capillaries, which begin in the sinuses of all body tissues and collect the lymph to transport it to the larger lymphatic vessels.

