



Royal College  
of Physicians

# Anatomical tables explained

We asked Francis Wells, a consultant cardiothoracic surgeon, to identify each anatomical table (from left to right).

Viewed from left to right

### **X21 Dissected adult male nervous system**

‘The very striking feature of this table is what we call the brachial plexus (area at the base of the neck) – it’s a bit like Clapham Junction, the railway line where they blend and then re-emerge as different lines. The nerves are coming out of the spinal cord.’

### **X19 Dissected adult female venous system**

‘What makes me certain that this is a venous dissection is the very clever representation of the cephalic vein (a large vein in the upper arm). This particular dissection would require an enormous amount of patience.’

### **X20 Dissected adult female arterial and venous system**

‘There are very strong aspects that make this look as though it is arterial – the arterial tree. There is a system of straight vessels arising from what is likely to be the internal mammary artery – you can see this in the centre of the chest.’

**‘... it’s a bit like Clapham Junction, the railway line where they blend and then re-emerge as different lines...’**



### **X22 Dissected adult male arterial and venous system**

‘You can see what looks very much like the arch of the aorta and there’s a little hole which may be the exit of the intercostal arteries, the little horizontal arteries which run beneath the ribs and provide the blood supply to the chest wall.’

### **X281 Dissected placenta or portal venous system**

‘We do not know for sure what this preparation is. It could be a dissected placenta and a portal venous system.’

In circulatory systems, a portal venous system occurs when a capillary bed pools into another.

### **X282 Dissected animal venous system**

‘Perhaps one of the most intriguing of all, this one may well represent the dissection of the venous system of an animal, a quadruped.’



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