

**TOPOGRAPHICAL VARIATIONS OF THE ANSA CERVICALIS
– A PRELIMINARY STUDY**

**T.N. HEWAPATHIRANA*, R.B.D. RANASINGHE, N.W. BANDARA
AND C.D. NANAYAKKARA.**

Department of Basic Sciences, Faculty of Dental Sciences, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya

Knowledge of the topography of the ansa cervicalis is important especially for surgeons who perform neck surgeries and who are interested in reconstruction surgeries. As the ansa cervicalis depresses, retracts and steadies the hyoid bone in speech and swallowing the preservation of it in functional or radical neck dissection is imperative as damage to it may hinder speech and swallowing. Also it is utilized to reinnervate the paralyzed larynx and to create an ansa cervicalis hypoglossal – facial anastomosis to correct the defects occurring in facial nerve palsies.

The morphology of the ansa cervicalis is complicated by its variable course and the location along the great vessels, as well as the significant differences observed in the arrangement of its contributing roots and regional branching pattern. As data on the variable anatomic course of the ansa cervicalis is not available to Sri Lanka; as the present study was conducted with a view to establish the common variations in the position of the ansa cervicalis in relation to the carotid sheath.

Topographical variations of the ansa cervicalis were observed in a total of 20 adult cadavers (12 male and 8 females) in the age range of 26 to 87 years. Although 80% showed a standard location anterior to the great vessels, 20% had a medial location. This poster illustrates the topographic variations of the ansa cervicalis that we encountered during this study.