

The superficial ulnar artery originating from the left brachial artery

Petra Simic, Fran Borovecki, Dubravco Jalsovec, Mislav Jelic,
Snjezana Martinovic and Ivan Vinter

Department of Anatomy, School of Medicine, University of Zagreb,
Salata 11, 10 000 Zagreb, Croatia - tel/fax: +38514566812

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SUMMARY

An anomalous superficial ulnar artery was found in the left arm of a 60-year-old man during anatomical dissection. It originated from the brachial artery approximately 6 cm distally to profound brachial artery. It crossed over the median nerve and coursed ventral to the nerve, but inferior to the bicipital aponeurosis and superficial to the flexor muscles. At the palm, it formed the superficial and deep palmar arches together with the branches of the radial artery. The clinical importance of the anomalous ulnar artery is discussed.

INTRODUCTION

The normal ulnar artery originates from the brachial artery in the cubital fossa, crosses deep under the median nerve and passes obliquely downward and medially, covered by pronator teres, flexor carpi radialis, palmaris longus and flexor digitorum superficialis muscles in the proximal half of the forearm. In the distal half of the forearm, it proceeds between the flexor carpi ulnaris and flexor digitorum superficialis muscles, being covered by the skin and fascia, and ends at the wrist (Clemente, 1985; Hollinshead, 1958). In anomalous cases of superficial ulnar artery, sometimes, the ulnar artery descends superficial to the forearm flexor muscles and reaches the wrist lateral to the ulnar nerve.

The superficial ulnar artery can originate directly from the axillary artery and was named by Bianchi (1943) a superficial brachio-ulnar artery. More often it originates from the brachial artery in the arm or cubital fossa (Adachi, 1928; Anil et al., 1996; Devansh, 1996; Fadel and Amonoo-Kuofi, 1996; Hazlett, 1949; Mc Cormack et al., 1953; Nakatani et al., 1996; Pabst and Lippert, 1968; Weathersby, 1956). It