THE ILIAC VEINS

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I – INTRODUCTION:

- The common iliac veins are two in number and are branches of the inferior vena cava.
- They arise from the union of the external iliac vein and the internal iliac vein, draining the pelvis and the lower limb.

II – COMMON ILIAC VEINS:

1. Common iliac veins:

- They originate from the union of the external iliac vein and the internal iliac vein at the level of the sacroiliac joint.
- They terminate by merging with each other on the right side of the L5 lumbar vertebra to form the inferior vena cava (IVC).

2. Right common iliac vein:

It is located behind its corresponding artery. The artery becomes lateral to its termination. It lies posterior to the obturator nerve and receives the right ascending lumbar vein.

3. Left common iliac vein:

- It is located behind its corresponding artery, obliquely directed to the left and below the artery.
- It lies :
  - **Anteriorly** to the sigmoid mesocolon and the superior mesenteric vessels.
  - **Laterally**, it is related to the gonadal vessels and the obturator nerve.
  - **Posteriorly**, it is in contact with the L5 vertebral body.

III – EXTERNAL ILIAC VEINS:

1. Origin and terminaton:

It is a continuation of the femoral vein below the inguinal ligament. It ends by joining the internal iliac vein to form the common iliac vein.

2. Path and relations:

- The external iliac artery lies laterally to the origin of the external iliac vein and then tends to become slightly superior towards its termination.
- In males, the vas deferens crosses the vein at its origin. The medial and intermediate iliac nodes are located along its inferior and medial borders.

3. Tributaries of the external iliac vein:

They are satellite veins of their corresponding arteries. The external iliac vein receives:

- **The inferior epigastric veins,**
- **The deep circumflex iliac veins.**

IV – INTERNAL ILIAC VEIN:

1. Origin and path:

- The internal iliac vein is approximately 4 cm in length and 15 mm in diameter.
- It originates at the level of the sacroiliac joint and then joins the external iliac vein to form the common iliac vein.
- The immediately subdiaphragmatic segment, less well vascularized, is supplied by:
  - Branches of the esophagocardio-tuberositary arteries,
  - Branches of the inferior phrenic arteries.

2. Anatomical relations:

- **Posteriorly:** Each vein is in relation to the piriformis muscle and the sacroiliac joint.

- **Anteriorly:** The right vein is in relation to its homonymous artery, which separates it from the ureter, while the left vein is in relation to the ureter and laterally to its homonymous artery.

3. Tributaries of the internal iliac vein:

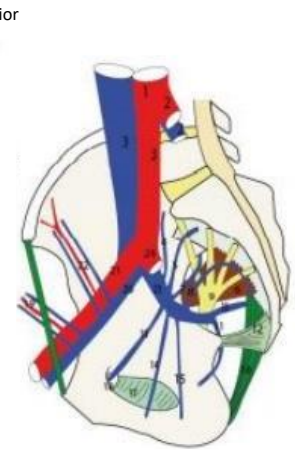
- The internal iliac vein drains the visceral plexuses:

  - Middle rectal vein,
  - Uterine vein.

- Parietal branches: These veins drain the pelvic walls and perineum. They include:

  - Superior and inferior gluteal veins,
  - Lateral sacral vein,
  - Obturator vein, which runs along the inferior border of the obturator artery,
  - Internal pudendal veins, which accompany the internal pudendal artery.

Internal iliac vein and deep veins of the iliac region



1- Abdominal aorta
2- Left common iliac artery and vein
3- Right common iliac artery and vein
4- Iliolumbar vein
5- Superior lateral sacral vein
6- Piriformis muscle
7- Gluteus maximus muscle
8- Superior gluteal vein
9- Sacral vein
10- Sciatic nerve
11- Gluteal vein
12- Internal pudendal vein
13- Sacro-tuberous ligament
14- Obturator vein
15- Genital vein
16- Middle rectal vein
17- Sacro-tuberous ligament
18- Obturator membrane
19- Obturator canal
20- Epigastric vessels
21- Right external iliac vein
22- Right external iliac artery
23- Circumflex iliac vessels
24- Right internal iliac vein
25- Right internal iliac artery

VI – CONCLUSION:

- The common iliac veins allow for the drainage of venous blood from the pelvis and the lower limb toward the inferior vena cava.
- Throughout their course, the iliac veins are in relation with various organs and vessels of the pelvis.