

The **inferior thyroid artery** arises from the thyrocervical trunk at the level of the first thoracic vertebra. It ascends anterior to the medial border of scalenus anterior before turning medially below the transverse process of the sixth cervical vertebra to pass anterior to the vertebral vessels behind the carotid sheath and sympathetic trunk. The middle cervical sympathetic ganglion is directly related to this artery. It descends on longus colli to the lower border of the thyroid gland, where it divides into several branches including the ascending cervical and inferior laryngeal arteries as well as pharyngeal and muscular branches.