

The **second cervical ventral spinal rami** emerge between the vertebral arches of C1 (atlas) and C2 (axis). Each ramus ascends between the transverse processes of C1 and C2, passes anterior to the first posterior intertransversarii muscle to emerge lateral to the vertebral artery. The nerves pass between longus capitis and levator scapulae (although occasionally scalenus medius may separate the nerve from levator scapulae), and deep to the internal jugular vein and the sternocleidomastoid muscle. Each ramus divides into ascending and descending branches, which join the first cervical ventral rami and the ascending branch of the third cervical ventral rami, respectively.

The second cervical ventral spinal rami join with the ventral rami of C3 to form the inferior roots of the ansa cervicalis and together with the ventral rami of C1, C3 and C4 participate in the formation of the cervical plexus.

Each ramus receives at least one grey ramus communicans from the superior cervical sympathetic ganglion.

Supply

The second cervical ventral spinal rami supply the longus capitis, longus colli and sternocleidomastoid muscles. Superficial branches supply the skin of the head and neck by the lesser occipital and greater auricular nerves and the transverse cutaneous nerve of the neck.