

The first cervical dorsal spinal rami, also known as the 'suboccipital nerves', are larger than their ventral counterparts. Each appears superior to the posterior arch of the atlas and inferior to the vertebral artery, to enter the suboccipital triangle where it supplies the surrounding muscles. Each nerve has a number of occasional branches, one, which accompanies the occipital artery, joining the greater and lesser occipital nerves, and a small branch from those supplying the obliquus capitis inferior muscles and joins the dorsal rami of C2.

**Supply**

The first cervical dorsal rami supply the rectus capitis posterior major and minor, obliquus capitis inferior and superior and semispinalis capitis muscles.