

Pre-vertebral Fascia

This is a plane of surgical importance. It is attached to the base of the skull, and extends over the pre-vertebral muscles (longus capitis, rectus capitis and longus colli) to attach distally at T4, just beyond the longus colli muscle. This forms a plane down which infections can tract. Thus cervical infections can give rise to a mediastinal abscesses.

Cranio-Vertebral Junction

Assessment of the various bony landmarks seen on lateral radiographs is important in determining normal and abnormal anatomy. There are a number of **radiographic lines** used:

McRae's line: from the anterior to the posterior lips of the foramen magnum. The tip of the odontoid should not project above.

Chamberlain's line: from the hard palate to its posterior lip and on to the posterior lip of foramen magnum. The odontoid tip should be less than 3mm above this line.

McGregor's line: from the posterior lip of the hard palate to the most caudal part of the occipital bone. The odontoid tip should be less than 4.5mm above this line.