

ANTERIOR ABDOMINAL WALL



Muscles

1. Pectoralis major
2. Internal intercostal
3. Pectoralis minor
4. Serratus anterior
5. External oblique
6. Rectus abdominis
7. Internal abdominal oblique
8. Transverse abdominal oblique
9. Rectus sheath
10. Inferior epigastric artery
11. Linea alba

Anterior superficial aspect of the abdomen showing the five muscles in the anterolateral abdominal wall: three flat muscles and two vertical muscles.

The three flat muscles are the external oblique, internal oblique and transversus abdominis. The two vertical muscles contained within the rectus sheath are the large rectus abdominis and pyramidalis.

Rectus sheath is formed by the aponeurosis of three lateral abdominal muscles (external oblique, internal oblique and transversus abdominis).

Both external and internal oblique muscles raises the intrabdominal pressure and causes lateral flexion of the trunk.

Arcuate line of Douglas is the curved horizontal line that marks the termination of the posterior rectus sheath. Below this line, Rectus abdominis lies on the transversalis fascia and extraperitoneal connective tissue.

Inferior epigastric artery arises just above the inguinal ligament from the medial side of the external iliac artery. It runs upwards and medially along the medial side of the deep inguinal ring. During its course, it raises a peritoneal fold called the lateral umbilical fold.

CLINICAL CORRELATION

Surgeons use various abdominal surgical incisions to gain access to the abdominal cavity. When possible, the incisions follow the cleavage lines in the skin. Before making an incision, a surgeon considers the direction of the muscle fibers and the location of the aponeuroses and nerves. The inferior epigastric artery forms the lateral border of Hesselbach's inguinal triangle, an important landmark in the laparoscopic inguinal hernia repair.

Question(s)

- *What is linea alba?*
- *What is inguinal ligament?*
- *Which arteries form the collateral blood supply in case of aortic obstruction?*