

Anatomical variation of the lateral cord of brachial plexus and the median nerve – a case report

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ABSTRACT

It is axiomatic that the knowledge of anatomical variations in the axilla will be of immense clinical implication. We present multiple variations found in the right axilla and flexor compartment of the brachium during routine dissection in a 50-year-old Sri Lankan male cadaver. The Median nerve(MN) was formed by fusion of three roots: one from the medial and two from the lateral cord of the brachial plexus. The slender first lateral root of the MN (1st LRMN) emerged at the level of terminal division of the medial cord. 1st LRMN crossed the third part of the axillary artery superficially to join the medial root of the MN and formed a common stem medial to the axillary artery. Lateral cord coursed down and divided into musculocutaneous nerve (MCN) and second lateral root of MN (2nd LRMN) just above the latissimusdorsi tendon in the axilla. 2nd LRMN had an oblique course over the axillary and upper part of brachial artery. 2nd LRMN joined the common stem and formed the MN proper medial to the brachial artery in the upper brachium. The MN proper coursed in the brachium medial to the brachial artery up to the cubital fossa. MCN continued distally lateral to the axillary and brachial artery without piercing the coracobrachialis muscle. MCN gave off a branch to coracobrachialis muscle and passed between biceps and brachialis muscle. Even though such variations are mostly incidental findings, knowledge of such variations permits correct interpretation of clinical neurophysiology and allows to take precautions during interventional procedures.

Key words : Anatomical variation, Axillary artery, Lateral cord, Median nerve, Musculocutaneous nerve