

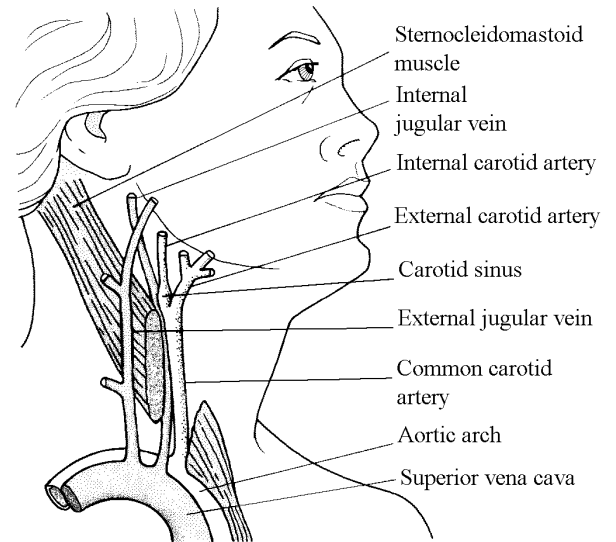
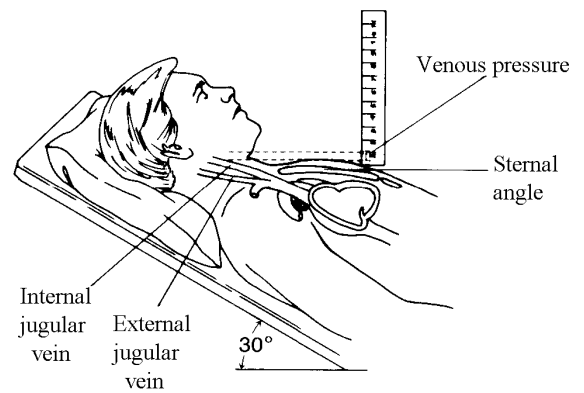
# How to Measure Jugular Vein Distention

1. Have the patient lie supine.
2. Elevate the head of the bed by 30 degrees.
3. Measure on the patient's right side. On this side, the vein is directly in line with the right atrium.
4. Ask the patient to turn his head slightly away from the side of the neck that is being examined.
5. Identify the external jugular vein.
6. Locate the pulsations of the internal jugular vein. Although either the internal or the external jugular vein can be used, the internal jugular vein is more reliable.
7. Identify the highest point at which the internal jugular vein pulsations can be seen.
8. Using a centimeter ruler, measure the vertical distance between the visible pulsations and the sternal angle. Use the sternal angle as the zero reference point.
9. Chart the number of centimeters measured and at what degree of elevation the bed was placed.

For example: The internal jugular vein pulse is 5 cm. above the sternal angle, with the head elevated 45 degrees.

A measurement that is 4 cm. above the sternal angle, with the head elevated 30 degrees is considered normal.

**Sternal angle:** The junction of the manubrium and body of the sternum.



Arteries and veins of the right side of the neck.