

Figure 1.4

Body planes. The body may be sectioned along any of these planes to observe internal parts.

A sagittal plane divides the body into what parts?

The horizontal plane extends in a direction perpendicular to the frontal and sagittal planes, since it divides the body into superior (upper) and inferior (lower) portions. The horizontal plane is also called the **transverse plane**. A section made along the horizontal plane is often referred to as a *cross section*.

Concepts Check

11. What is the purpose of constructing scientific terms from Latin and Greek word parts?
12. Why should you use directional terms when describing the location of body parts instead of more common descriptions, such as *on top of*, *below*, or *to the side*?
13. What is a sectional plane?
14. How may sectional planes be used to view body structures?

THE BODY PLAN

Concept: *The human body is divided into regions. Some regions contain spaces called cavities that house organs.*

Before studying minor details, it is often helpful to look at the “big picture” as a first step. As an early step in our study of the human body, let us turn now to the “big picture” of human anatomy and observe how the body is organized into regions and cavities.

Body Regions

The major areas of the body that are structurally distinguishable are called **regions**. They include the **head**, the **neck**, the **trunk**, the **upper appendages**, and the **lower appendages**. Each major region is divided further into smaller regions. For example, the anterior side of the trunk is divided into an upper portion, the **thorax**, a middle portion, the **abdomen**, and a lower portion, the **pelvis**. The posterior side of the trunk is simply called the **back** region. The major regions of the body and their useful divisions are shown in Figure 1.5. Surface features, or landmarks, that are routinely used by physicians during physical examinations are also included in Figure 1.5. Knowledge of the regions of the body and their landmarks aid the anatomist in describing the relative location of parts, and the physician in identifying internal causes of surface pain.

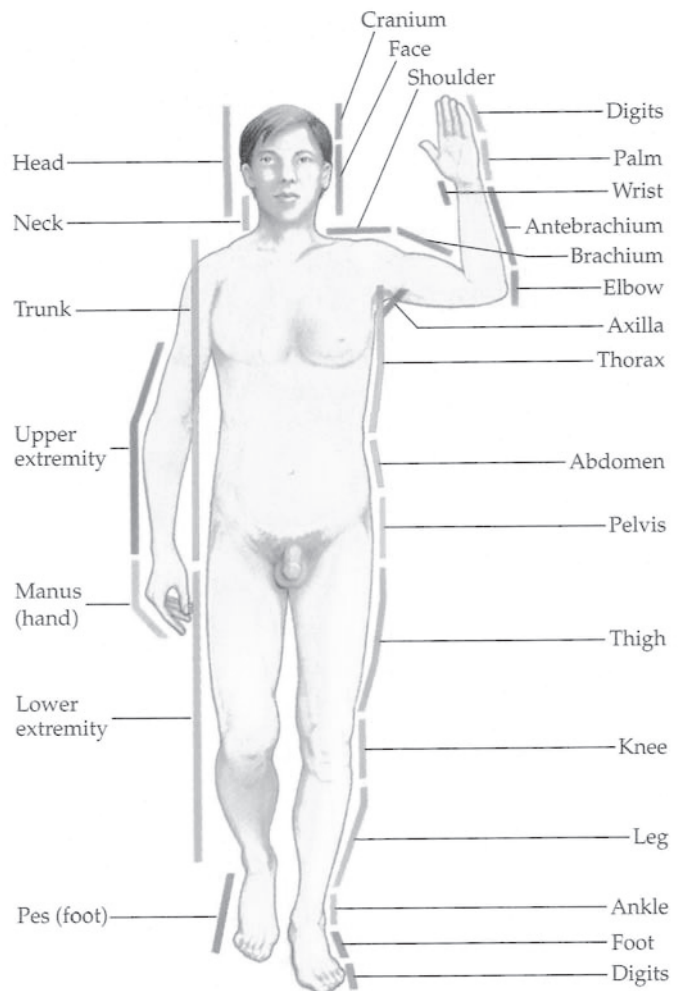


Figure 1.5

Regions of the body. The regions shown in this anterior view represent many of the important body regions.

What is the location of the axilla relative to the thigh (in directional terms)?