The Dural Venous Sinuses

- The dural venous sinuses are spaces between the endosteal and meningeal layers of the dura.
- The sinuses contain an endothelial lining that is continuous into the veins that are connected to them.
- There are no valves in the sinuses or in the veins that are connected to the sinuses.
- The superior sagittal sinus is found in the upper border of the falx cerebri and begins at the crista galli. The superior sagittal sinus is fed by blood from the superior cerebals vein and ends at the confluence of sinuses near the internal occipital protuberance.
- The inferior sagittal sinus is located in the lower free border of the falx cerebri between the two cerebral hemispheres. It begins anteriorly and ends with its junction with straight sinus.
- The straight sinus originates with the union of the great cerebral vein and inferior sagittal sinus. It runs posteriorly in the junction between the falx cerebelli and tentorium cerebelli to become continuous with one of the transverse sinuses (most commonly the left).
- The cavernous sinuses are found on either side of the body of the sphenoid bone in middle cranial fossae. They receive blood from the sphenoparietal sinuses which are located underneath the free edges of the lesser wings of the sphenoid bone. Blood also drains into the cavernous sinuses via the superior and inferior ophthalmic veins. The intercavernous sinuses provide a communication between the cavernous sinuses. They are located in the diaphragma sellae which covers the hypophyseal fossa and surrounds the hypophyseal stalk. The internal carotid artery, sympathetic nerve plexus and the abducens nerve are inside the cavernous sinuses. In the wall of the cavernous sinuses are the oculomotor, trochlear, ophthalmic and maxillary nerves. The cavernous sinuses drain posteriorly through the superior and inferior petrosal sinuses and inferiorly through the pterygoid plexus of veins.
- The superior petrosal sinuses are located in the edge of the tentorium cerebelli on the ridge of petrous part of the temporal bone. They drains into the transverse sinuses.
- The inferior petrosal sinuses are found at the base of the petrous part of the temporal bone in the posterior cranial fossae where they empty into the internal jugular vein. The basilar sinus interconnects with inferior petrosal sinuses and the internal vertebral plexus.
- The transverse sinuses extend laterally from the confluence of sinuses in the tentorium cerebelli. The transverse sinuses travel ventrally to become the sigmoid sinuses of each side.
- The sigmoid sinuses bend into an S-shaped curve and continue into the internal jugular vein through the jugular foramen.
- The occipital sinus is located in the posterior attached border of the falx cerebelli. It communicates superiorly with confluence of sinuses and inferiorly with the internal vertebral plexus.
Dural Venous Sinuses.
View is with the skull cap removed and the cranial cavity exposed.

A. Sphenoparietal
B. Intercavernous
C. Sigmoid
D. Occipital
E. Confluence
F. Basilar
G. Transverse
H. Superior Petrosal
I. Inferior Petrosal
J. Cavernous
K. Superior Sagittal
Dural Venous Sinuses: Lateral View

A. Superior Sagittal Sinus
B. Great Cerebral Vein
C. Ophthalmic Veins
D. Facial Vein
E. Cavernous Sinus
F. Inferior Petrosal Sinus
G. Jugular Vein
H. Sigmoid Sinus
I. Superior Petrosal Sinus
J. Transverse Sinus
K. Straight Sinus
L. Inferior Sagittal Sinus