

# ANATOMY AND DIAGNOSTIC USE OF AUTONOMIC NERVOUS SYSTEM PATHWAYS

## GOALS:

1) UNDERSTAND STRUCTURES AND PATHWAYS SEEN IN GROSS ANATOMY PROSECTIONS OF AUTONOMICS (NEXT BLOCK)

2) REVIEW AUTONOMICS TO EYE FOCUS: **HORNER'S SYNDROME** - damage to Sympathetic pathways:

## SYMPTOMS -

**MIOSIS** - pupillary constriction

**PTOSIS** - drooping eyelid

**ANHYDROSIS** - lack of sweating

## CLINICALLY IMPORTANT HORNER'S SYNDROME



# OUTLINE

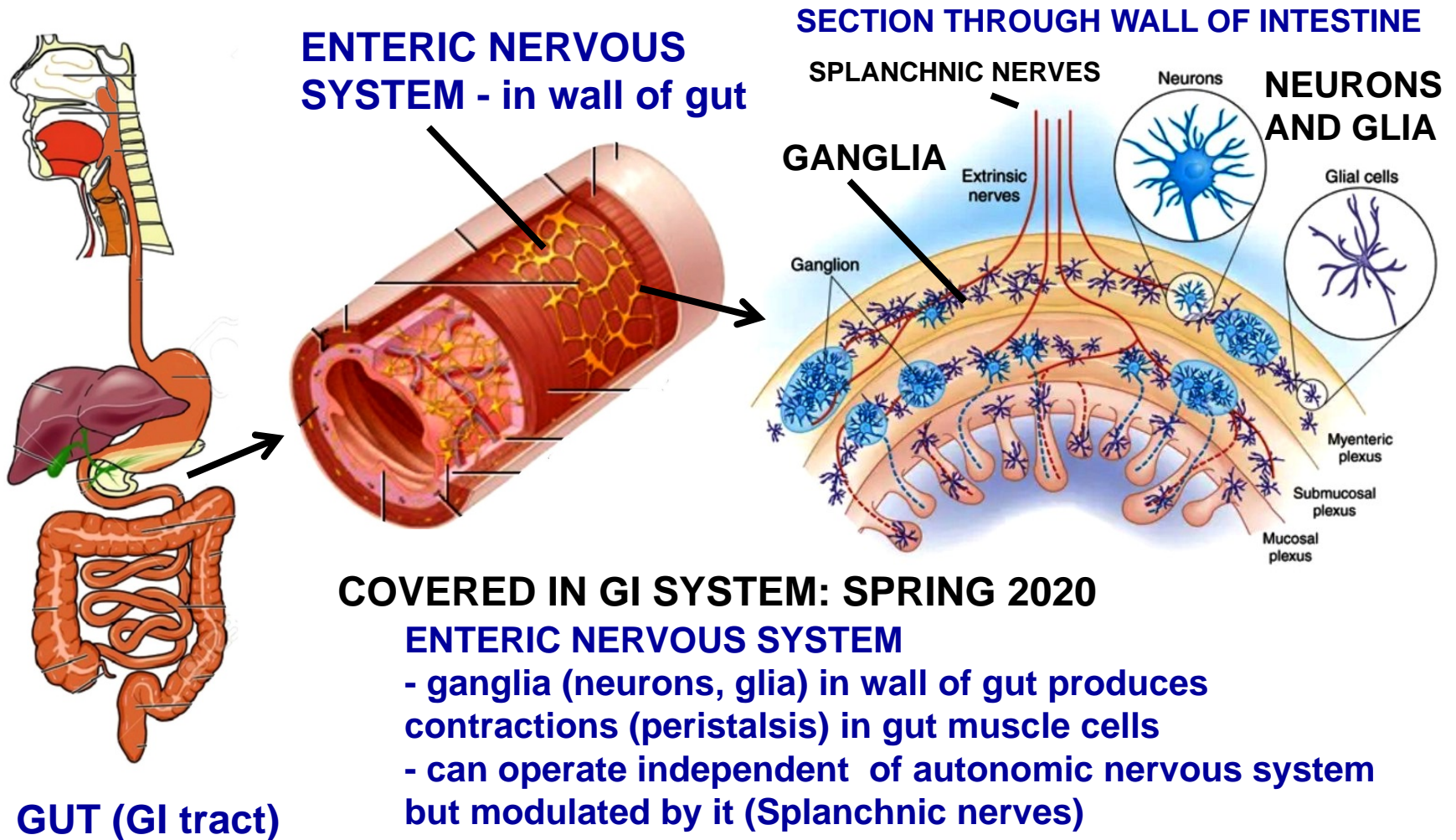
**1. GENERAL REVIEW OF AUTONOMIC NERVOUS SYSTEM -**  
**Sympathetics and Parasympathetics - Asymmetry:**  
**Sympathetics are widespread; Parasympathetics are much more localized (except Vagus nerve)**

**Why? Sympathetics go to Skin, not Parasympathetics; ex. control of sweating**

**2. ANATOMY OF SYMPATHETIC PATHWAYS** - structures can be seen in dissections in thorax.

**3. SYMPATHETICS TO HEAD AND HORNER'S SYNDROME (= damage to Sympathetics)** - **CLINICAL FOCUS:** Autonomic pathways to **EYE** (and head) are **used diagnostically**

**WHY IS THE AUTONOMIC NERVOUS SYSTEM A MESS? EVOLUTION OF NERVOUS SYSTEM - starts as primitive nerve net (meshwork of neurons) - organization preserved in human GUT (GI tract) = ENTERIC NERVOUS SYSTEM**



**ENTERIC NERVOUS SYSTEM - in wall of gut**

**SECTION THROUGH WALL OF INTESTINE**  
**SPLANCHNIC NERVES**  
**NEURONS AND GLIA**  
**GANGLIA**  
 Extrinsic nerves  
 Ganglion  
 Myenteric plexus  
 Submucosal plexus  
 Mucosal plexus

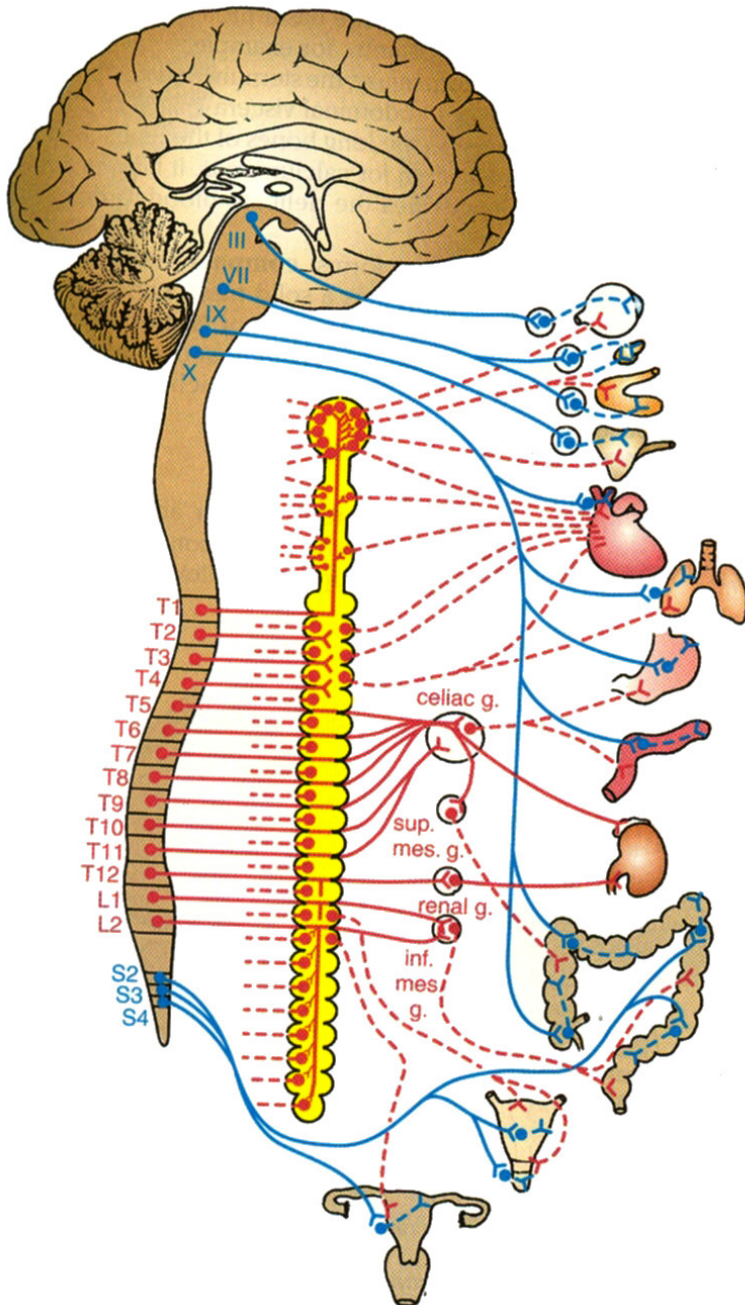
**GUT (GI tract)**

**COVERED IN GI SYSTEM: SPRING 2020**

**ENTERIC NERVOUS SYSTEM**

- ganglia (neurons, glia) in wall of gut produces contractions (peristalsis) in gut muscle cells
- can operate independent of autonomic nervous system but modulated by it (Splanchnic nerves)
- recent research: immune system acts on Enteric nervous system

## GENERAL REVIEW AUTONOMIC = VISCERAL NERVOUS SYSTEM



Autonomic Nervous system = Visceral nervous system -part of peripheral nervous system; **involuntary, unconscious part of nervous system**; (autonomic means self-regulating or automatic)

a. Visceral Motor (parasympathetic and sympathetic efferents) -

innervate **smooth and cardiac muscle, blood vessels glands (ex. sweat glands) and internal organs**; largely unconscious actions.

b. Visceral Sensory (afferents) -

sensory neurons that innervate internal organs, blood vessels; only provide **imprecise localization of sensation** and dull sense of pressure, pain, etc.



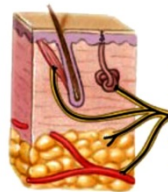
# ASYMMETRY: SOME BODY STRUCTURES RECEIVE ONLY SYMPATHETICS NOT PARASYMPATHETICS

## SYMPATHETICS

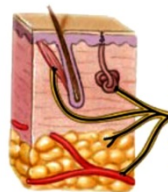
INNERVATE:

- 1) Skin
- 2) Peripheral blood vessels

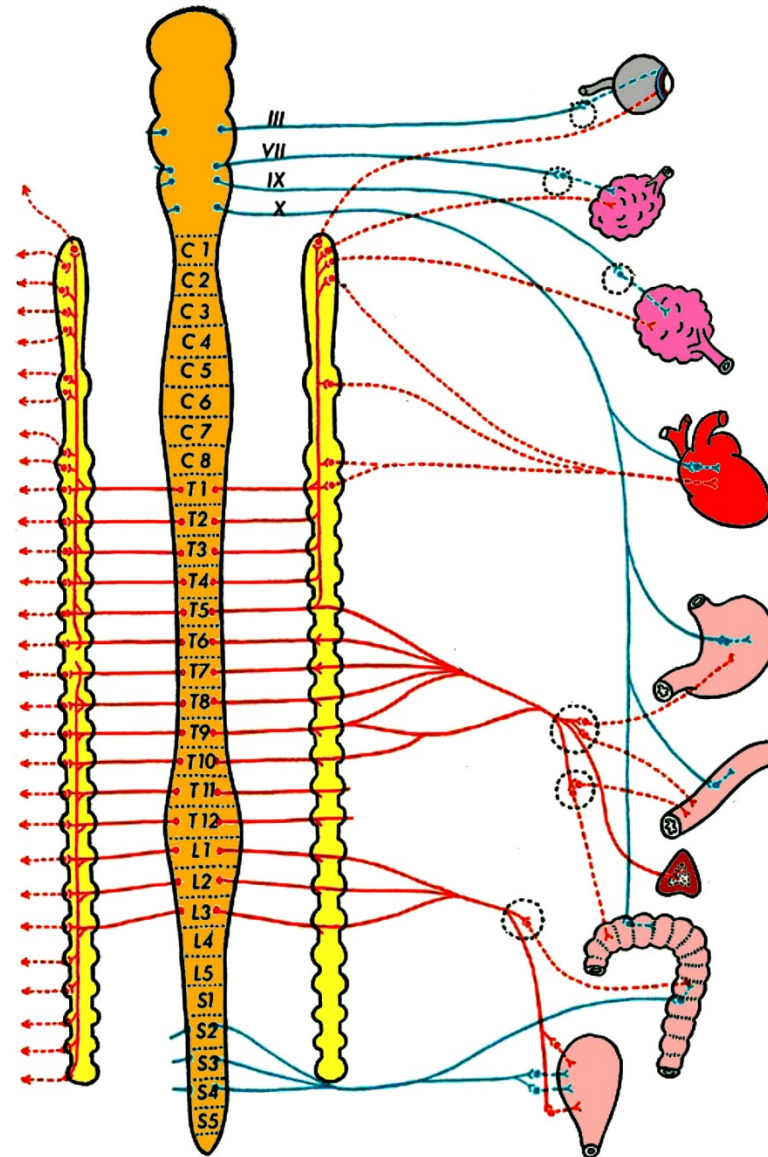
SKIN



SKIN



Sympa-  
thetics go  
to the  
body  
wall, i.e.  
Skin



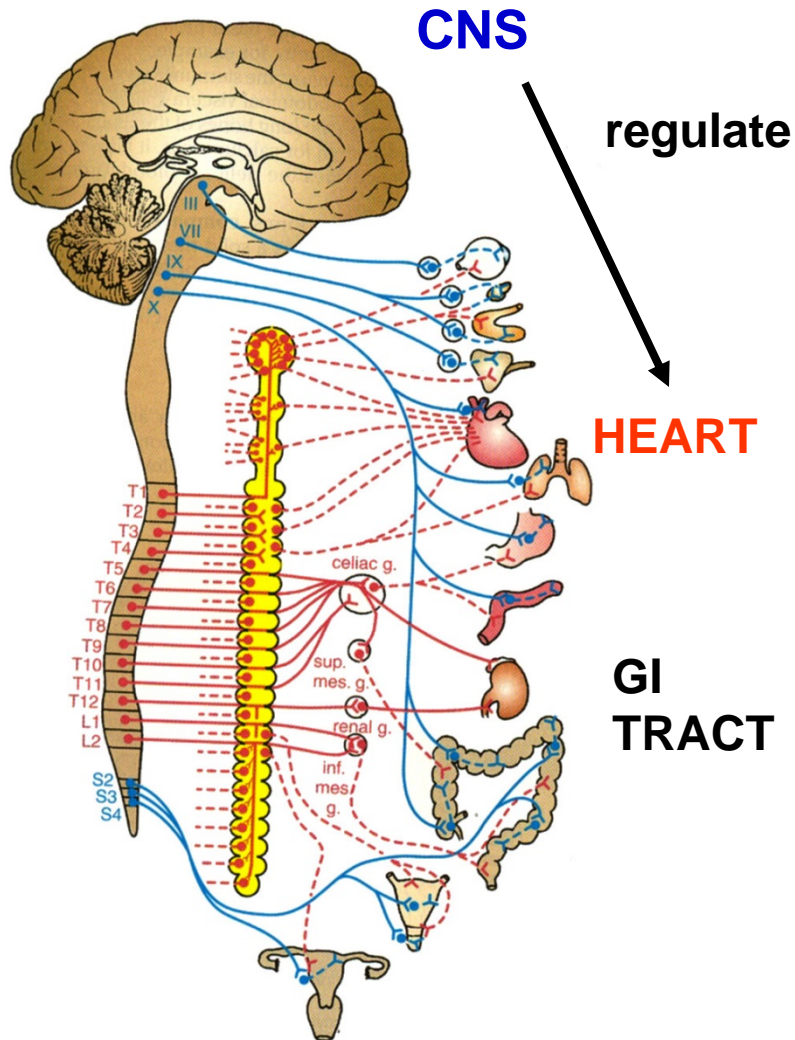
## PARA- SYMPATHETICS

INNERVATE:

Do NOT innervate  
skin and peripheral  
blood vessels

Classic  
description:  
Para-  
sympathetics  
do not go to  
the body wall

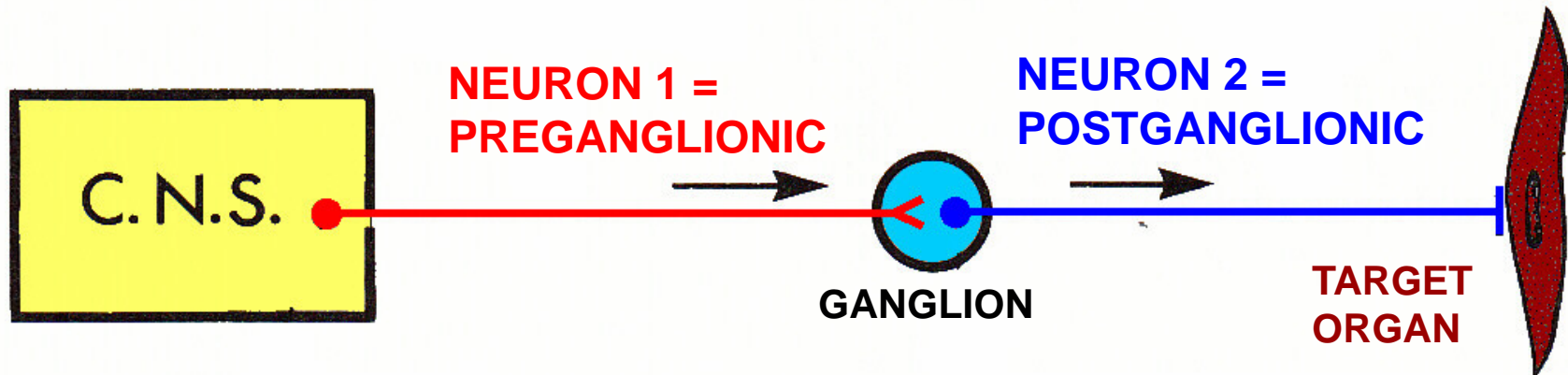
# AUTONOMICS ARE NOT JUST REACTIVE BUT CONTINUOUSLY REGULATES AND CONTROLS BODY FUNCTIONS (HOMEOSTASIS)



The autonomic nervous system is often **thought of as reactive to stimuli (ex. fight or flight)**. However, many autonomies provide pathways for the CNS to **continuously regulate and control body functions:**  
ex

- 1) Thermoregulation - regulate body temperature
- 2) Cardiovascular function in heart and blood vessels - monitor and regulate heart rate, blood pressure, etc.
- 3) GI function - secretion, motility

# VISCERAL MOTOR = AUTONOMIC NERVOUS SYSTEM



All two neuron pathways:

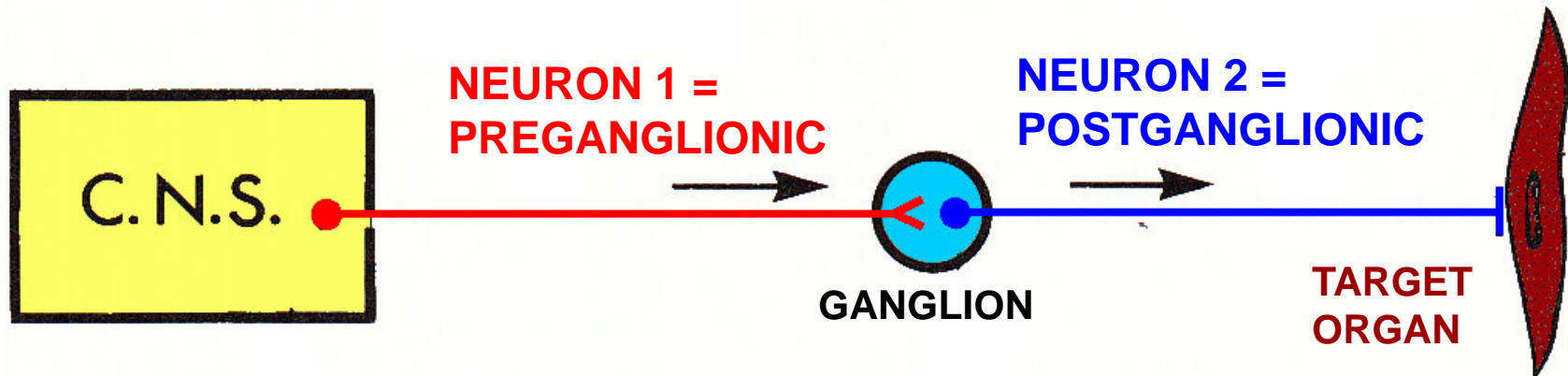
- 1) **Neuron 1 = Preganglionic neuron** - cell body in CNS; axon leaves CNS and synapses in autonomic ganglion
- 2) **Neuron 2 = Post ganglionic neuron** - cell body in autonomic ganglion; axon goes to target organ

note: **Sympathetic - ganglia close to vertebrae**  
**Parasympathetic - ganglia close to target organ**

**Sympathetic - preganglionic short; postganglionic long**

**Parasympathetic - preganglionic long; postganglionic short**

## BASIC PATHWAY: 2 NEURON ARC



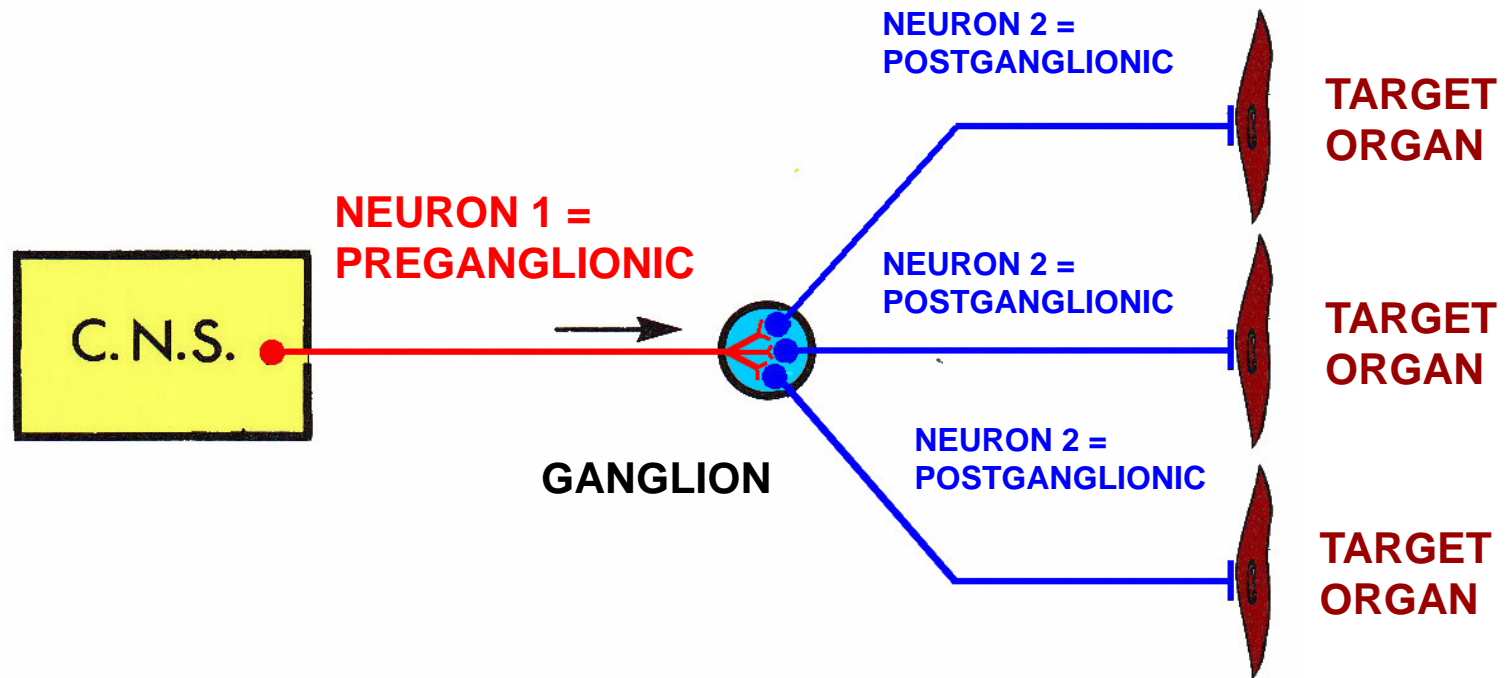
All two neuron pathways:

- 1) **Neuron 1 = Pre-ganglionic neuron** - cell body in CNS; axon leaves CNS and synapses in autonomic ganglion
- 2) **Neuron 2 = Post-ganglionic neuron** - cell body in autonomic ganglion; axon goes to target organ

# WHY?



## DIVERGENCE : AUTONOMICS CAN ACTIVATE MANY TARGETS SIMULTANEOUSLY



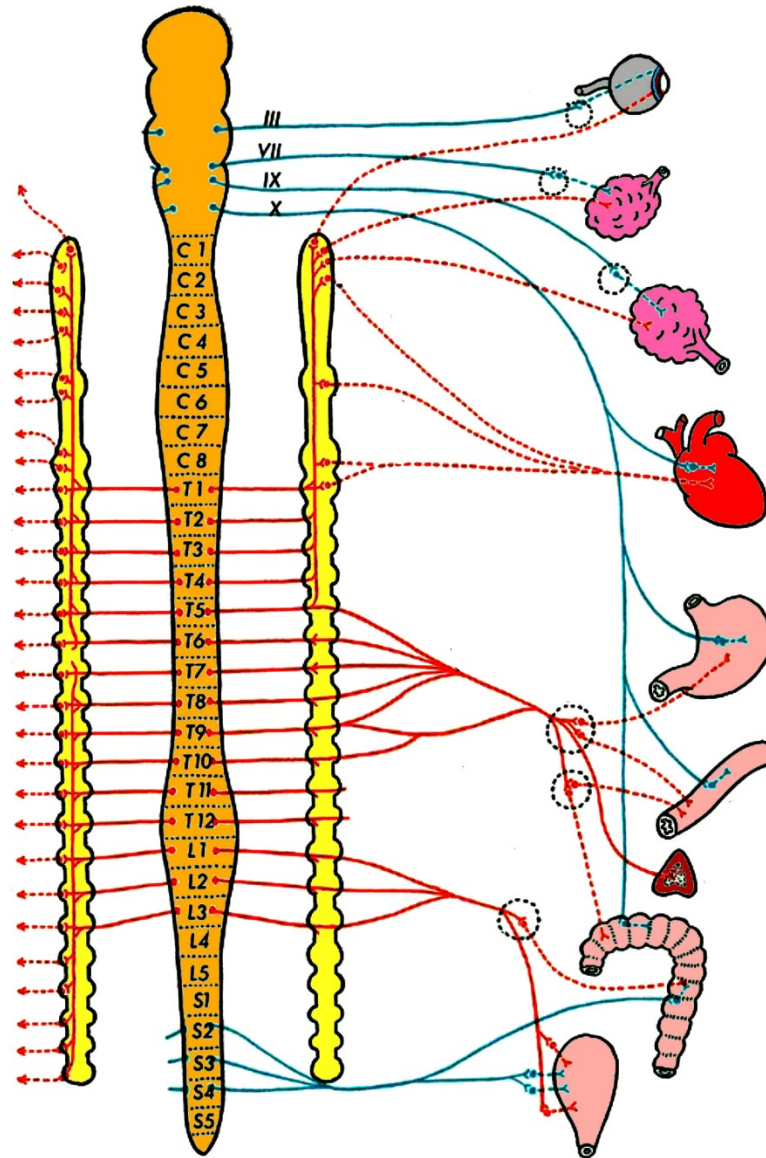
Considerable divergence of signal - One Pre-ganglionic neuron usually activates many (15 - 200) Post-ganglionic neurons; Autonomics can activate many targets simultaneously (ex. Thermoregulation - many sweat glands secrete at the same time)

# PARTS OF AUTONOMIC NERVOUS SYSTEM: SYMPATHETICS AND PARASYMPATHETICS

**SYMPATHETICS**  
**– ‘FIGHT OR FLIGHT’**

**OUT: Thoraco-lumbar levels**

**GANGLIA: Near CNS (most)**



**PARA-SYMPATHETICS**  
**– ‘REST AND DIGEST’**

**OUT: Cranio-sacral levels**

**GANGLIA: Near TARGET (all)**

**TWO DIVISIONS - PARASYMPATHETIC AND SYMPATHETIC** - in some systems have opposite effects  
examples:

<b>SYSTEM</b>	<b><u>SYMPATHETIC - 'FIGHT OR FLIGHT'</u></b>	<b><u>PARASYMPATHETIC - REST AND DIGEST</u></b>
<b>HEART</b>	<b>INCREASE RATE, CONTRACTION</b>	<b>DECREASE RATE</b>
<b>GI SYSTEM</b>	<b>DECREASE STOMACH MOVEMENTS, DECREASE SECRETIONS</b>	<b>INCREASE STOMACH MOVEMENTS, INCREASE SECRETIONS</b>
<b>SALIVARY GLANDS</b>	<b>DECREASE SECRETION</b>	<b>INCREASE SECRETION</b>

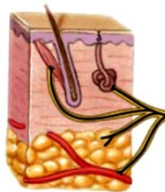
# ASYMMETRY: SOME BODY STRUCTURES RECEIVE ONLY SYMPATHETICS NOT PARASYMPATHETICS

## SYMPATHETICS

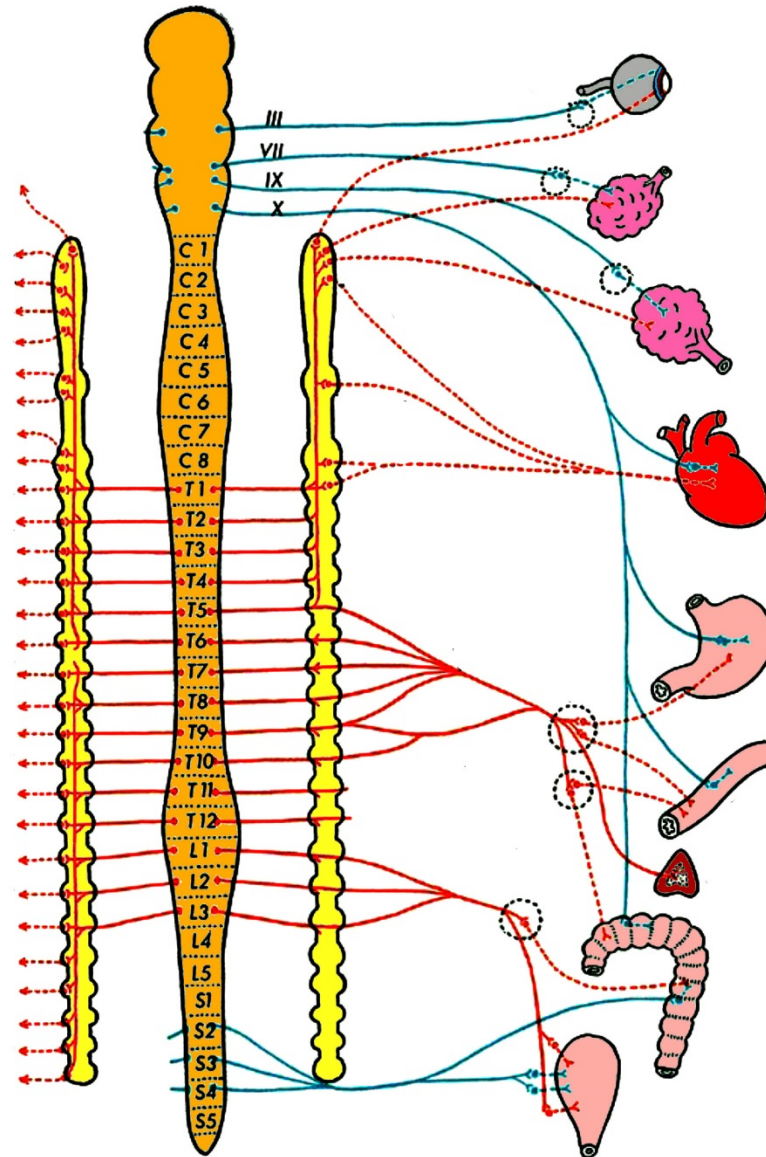
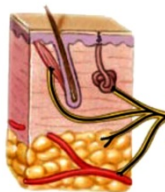
INNERVATE:

- 1) Skin
- 2) Peripheral blood vessels

SKIN



SKIN



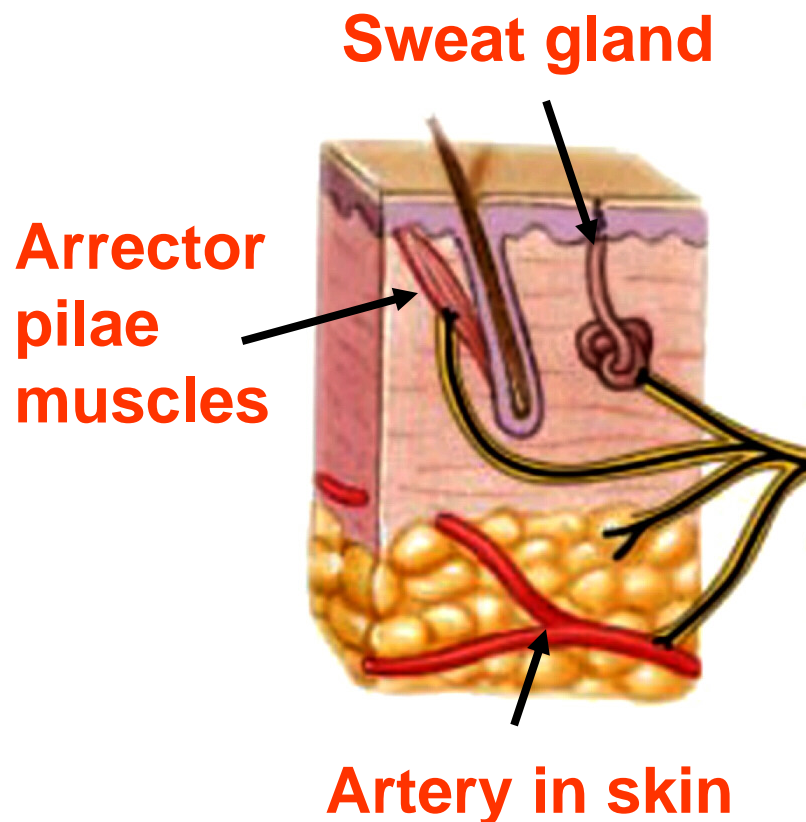
## PARA-SYMPATHETICS

INNERVATE:

Do NOT innervate skin and peripheral blood vessels



# STRUCTURES OF SKIN ARE INNERVATED ONLY BY SYMPATHETICS (NOT PARASYMPATHETICS)



**ONLY RECEIVE SYMPATHETICS,  
NOT PARASYMPATHETICS  
(examples)**

**1) SKIN - sweat glands, arrector  
pilae muscles**

**2) PERIPHERAL BLOOD VESSELS**

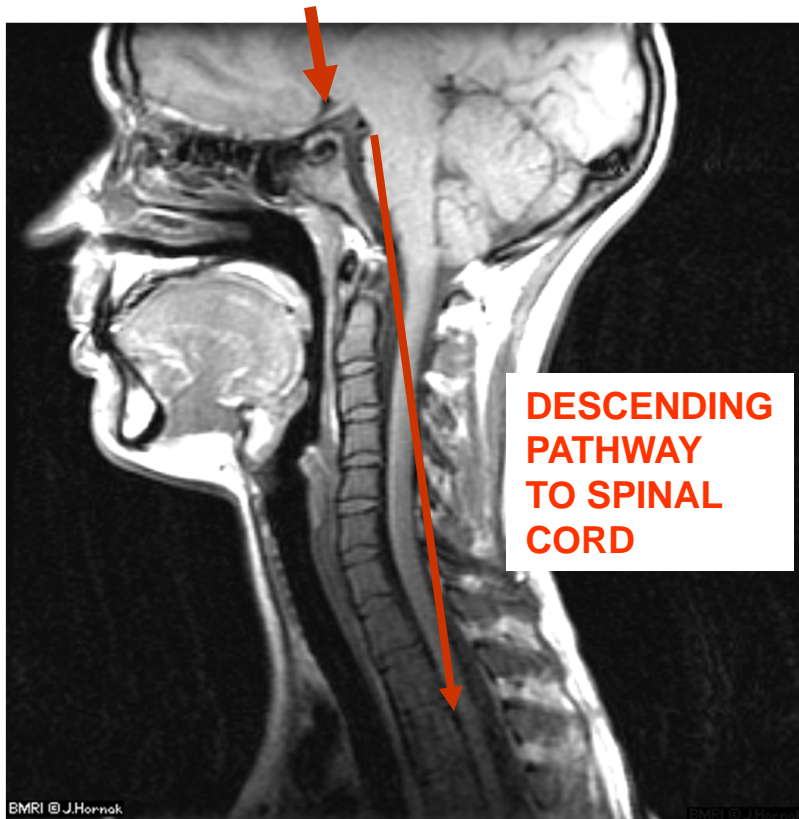
**Consequence; SYMPATHETICS  
ARE ANATOMICALLY MUCH  
MORE WIDESPREAD THAN PARA-  
SYMPATHETICS; PATHWAYS  
MORE COMPLEX**

**CLINICAL**

**SWEAT GLANDS ARE ONLY INNERVATED BY SYMPATHETICS**

# THERMOREGULATION - controlled in HYPOTHALAMUS

## HYPOTHALAMUS



SIGNALS FROM HYPOTHALAMUS PROJECT VIA HYPOTHALMOSPINAL TRACT (+brainstem) TO AUTONOMIC NUCLEI IN SPINAL CORD (LATERAL HORN)

## RESPONSES TO INCREASED TEMPERATURE (Anterior Hypothalamus/Preoptic area)

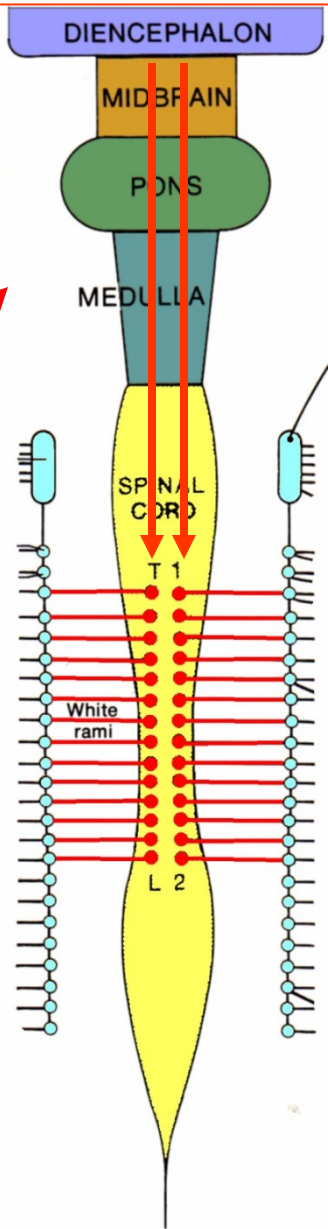
- Peripheral Vasodilation
- Increased Sweating
- Water and Electrolyte retention

## RESPONSES TO DECREASED TEMPERATURE (Caudal hypothalamus)

- Peripheral vasoconstriction
- Decreased sweating
- Contract arrector pilae muscles
- Shivering

**BRAIN -  
parts of  
brainstem**

**HYPOTHALAMUS**



**HYPOTHALMUS:  
CONTROL OF  
SYMPATHETIC  
FUNCTION**

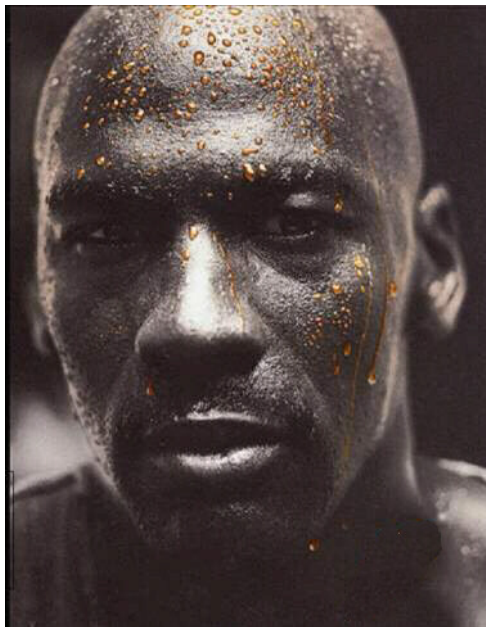
**Hypothalamo-  
spinal tract -  
descending  
signals to  
Pre-ganglionic  
neurons in  
Spinal Cord**

**Sympathetic  
outflow at  
Thoracic and  
Lumbar  
levels**

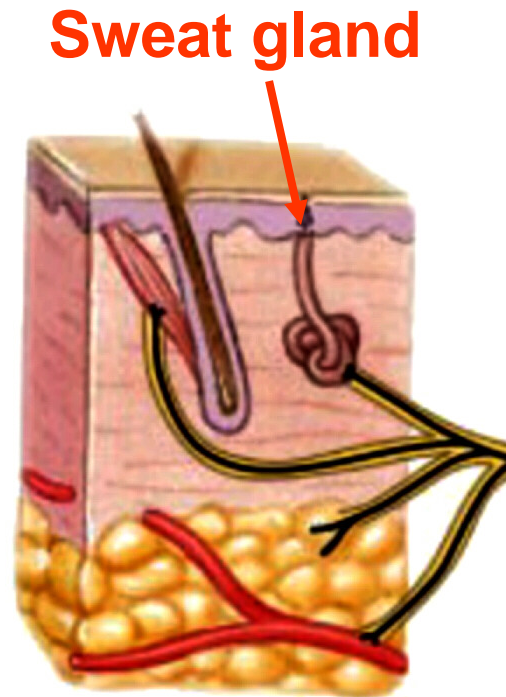
**MEDIATED BY  
SYMPATHETICS**

# SOME REGULATORY PROCESS REQUIRE WIDESPREAD ACTIVATION OF TARGET ORGANS

## EXAMPLE: THERMOREGULATION



Michael Jordan sweating  
Gatorade (\$)



RESPONSE TO  
CHANGES IN BODY  
TEMPERATURE  
MEDIATED BY  
SYMPATHETICS (NOT  
PARASYMPHETICS)

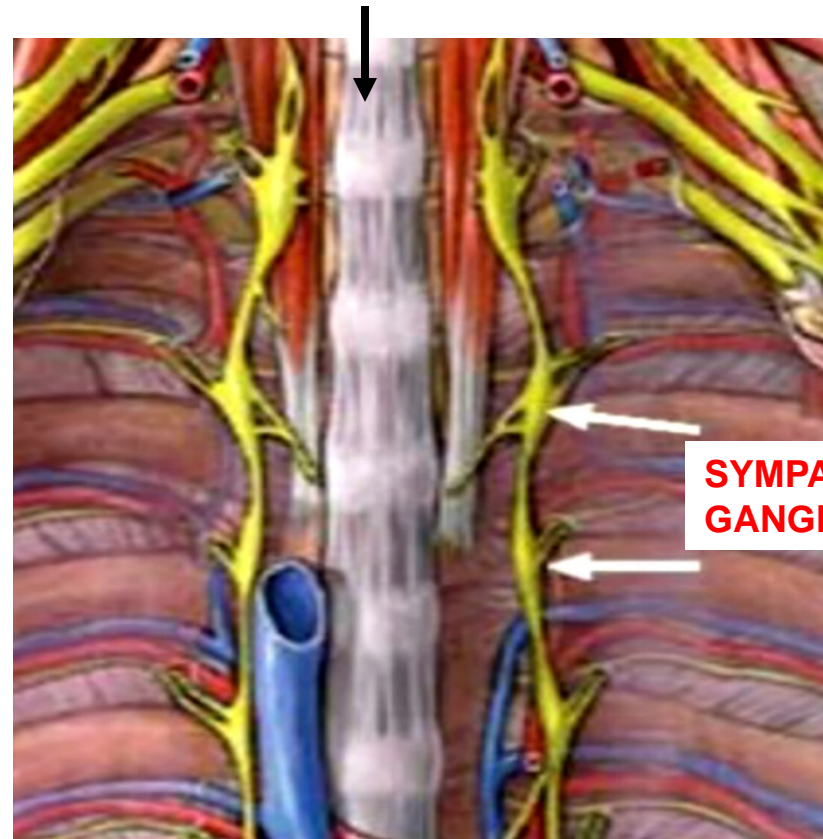
INCREASED  
TEMPERATURE  
- increased secretion  
of sweat glands

There are over 2 million sweat glands in the human body; how does the Nervous system activate them simultaneously?



**SYMPATHETICS HAVE WIDESPREAD EFFECTS BY SYMPATHETIC CHAIN - called Paravertebral Ganglia**

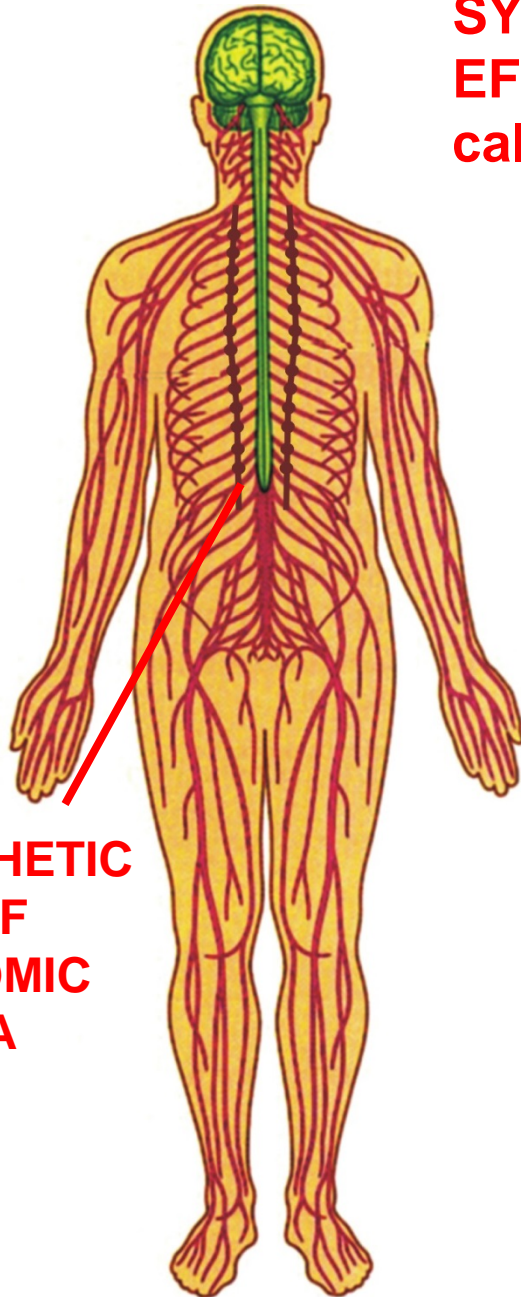
**Bodies of Thoracic Vertebrae (anterior side)**



**SYMPATHETIC GANGLIA**

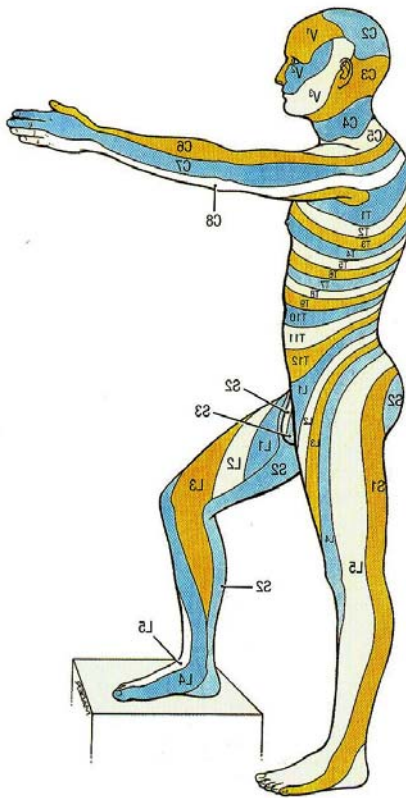
**View of the anterior side (front) of vertebrae inside the thorax (chest cavity); chain of ganglia are on sides of vertebrae (paravertebral)**

**SYMPATHETIC CHAIN OF AUTONOMIC GANGLIA**

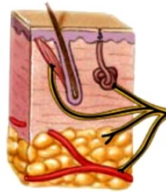


# SYMPATHETICS ARE DISTRIBUTED WITH PERIPHERAL NERVES

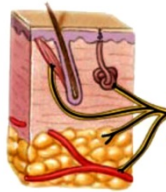
## PATHWAYS TO SKIN



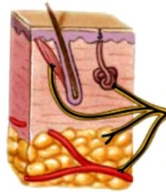
SKIN



SKIN



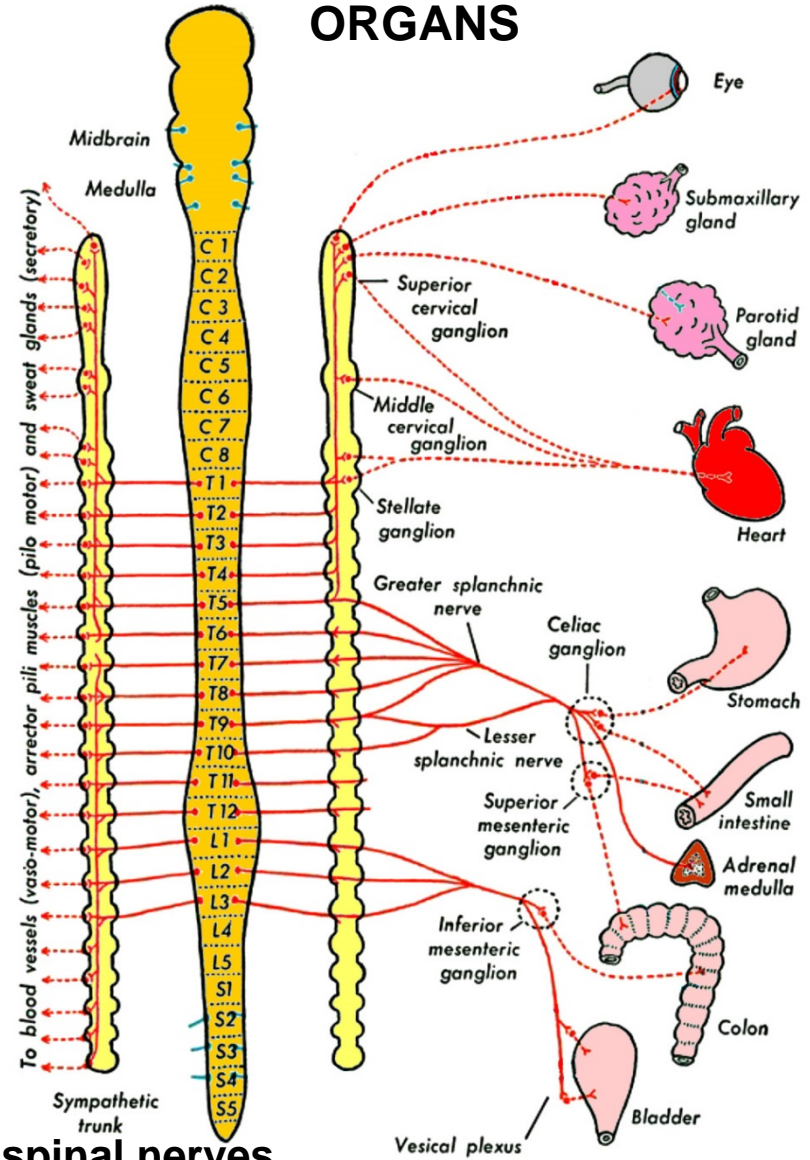
SKIN



## PATHWAYS TO SKIN

- sympathetics make up ~8% of axons in spinal nerves

## PATHWAYS TO INTERNAL ORGANS

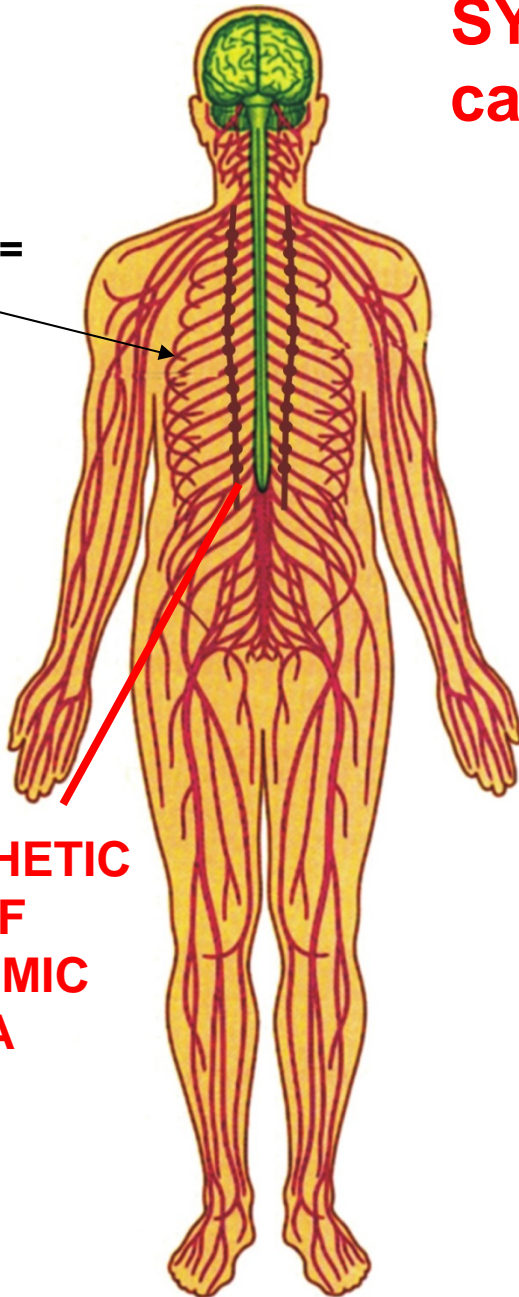




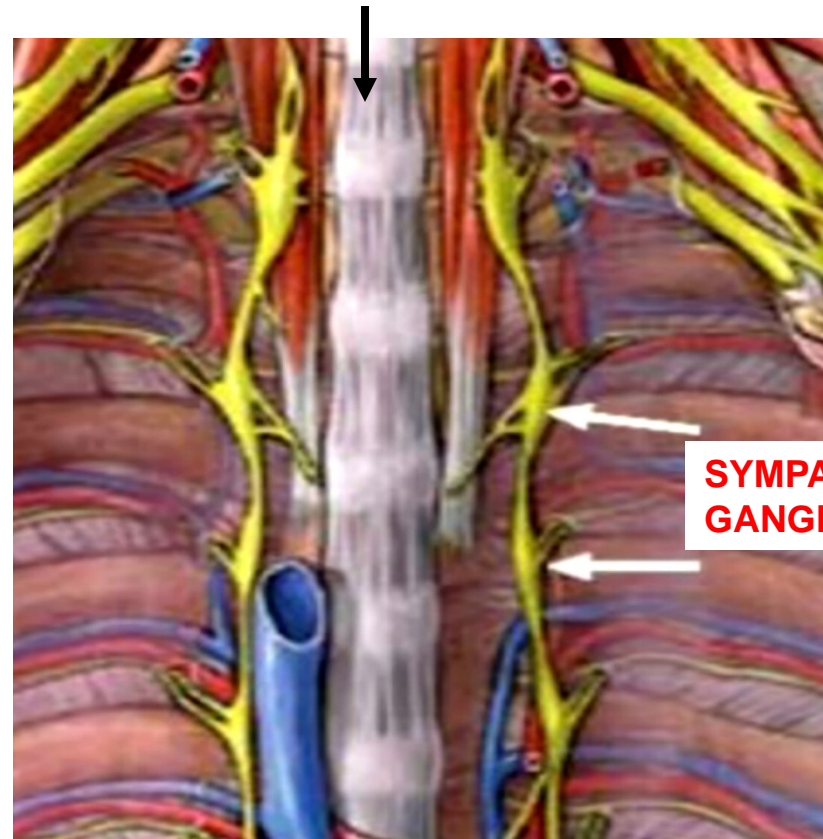
# SYMPATHETIC CHAIN OF GANGLIA - called Paravertebral Ganglia

THORAX =  
CHEST

SYMPATHETIC  
CHAIN OF  
AUTONOMIC  
GANGLIA

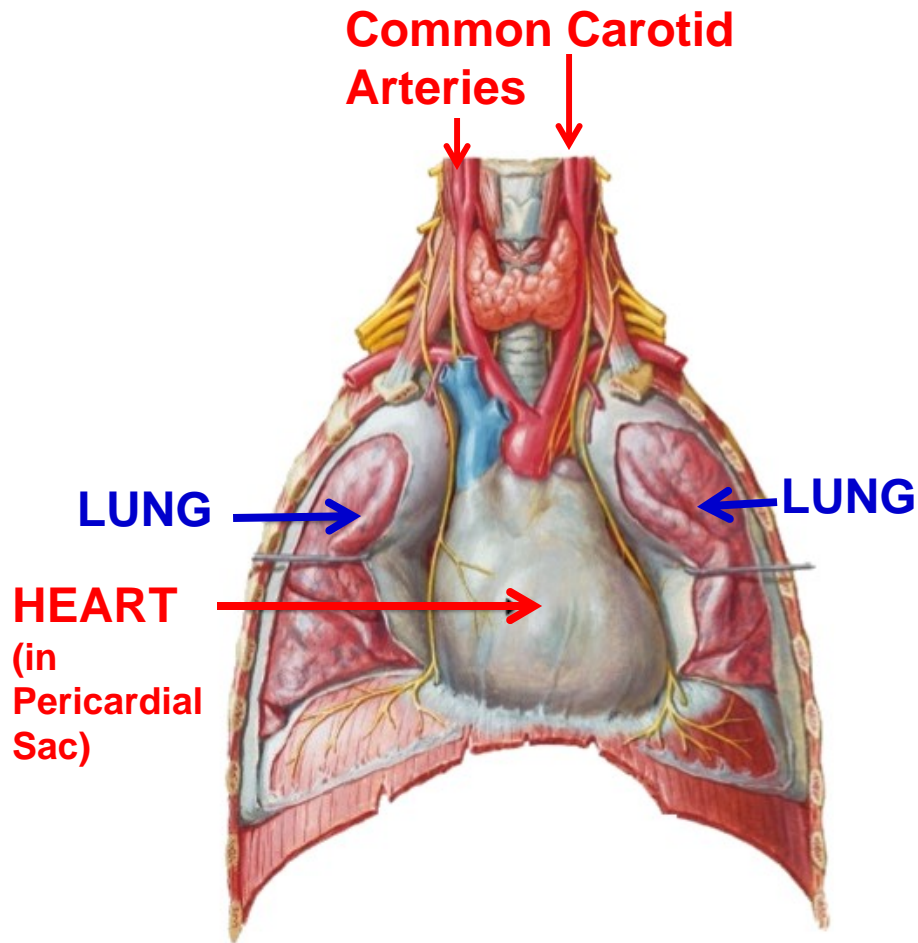


Bodies of Thoracic Vertebrae (anterior side)

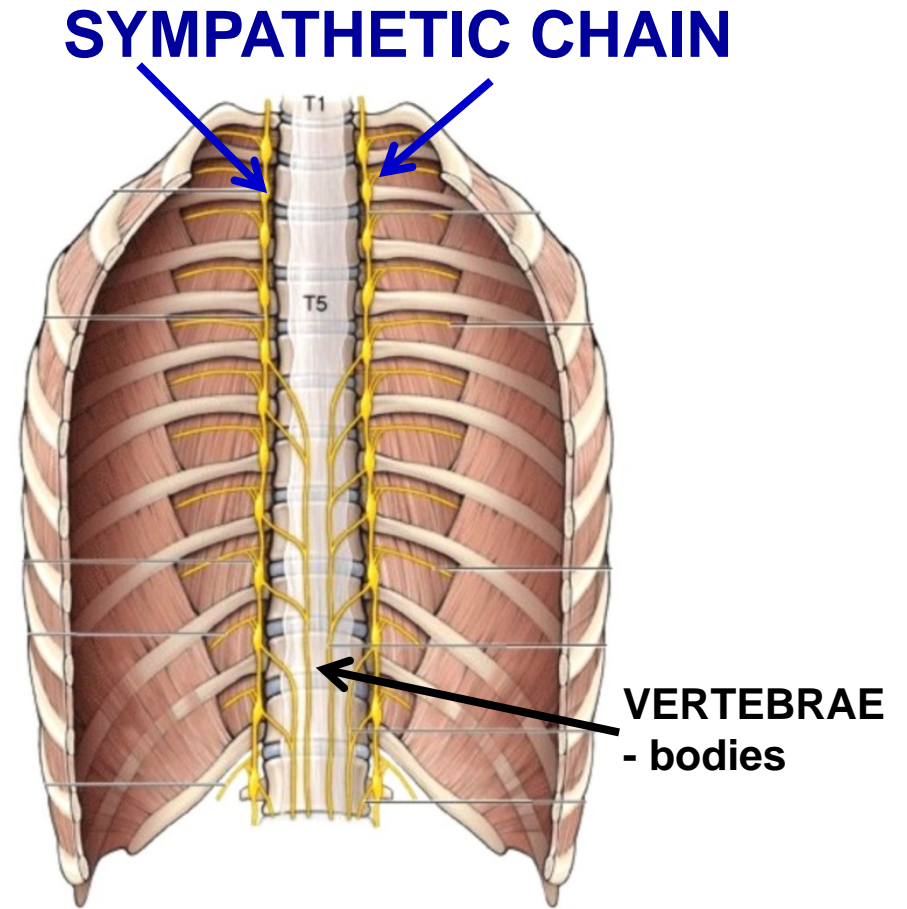


View of the anterior side (front) of vertebrae  
inside the thorax (chest cavity); chain of  
ganglia are on sides of vertebrae (paravertebral)

# LOCATION OF SYMPATHETIC CHAIN



**THORAX DISSECTION - remove ribs from anterior wall; see Heart and Lungs**

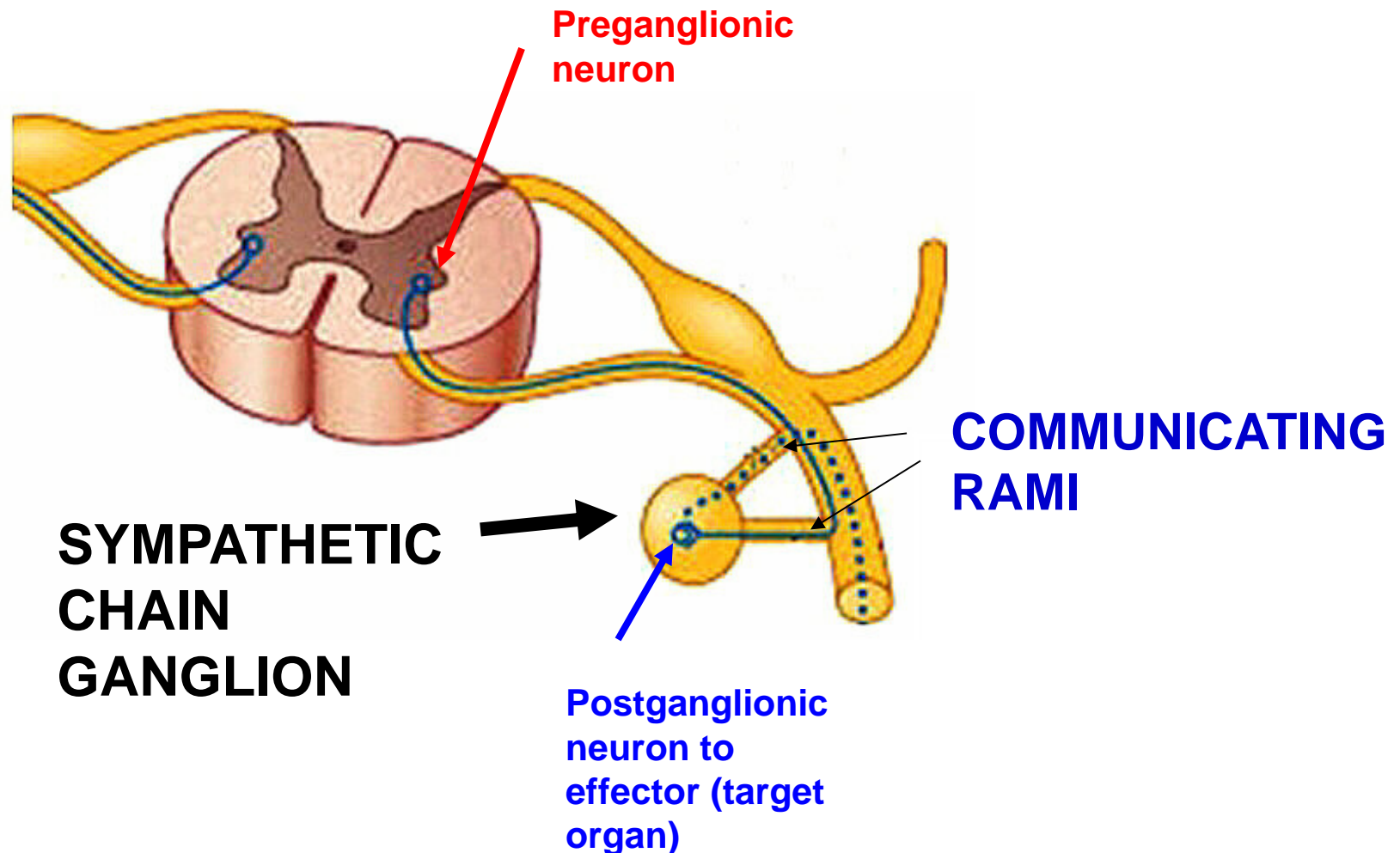


**REMOVE HEART AND LUNGS - Thorax is hollow; Vertebral bodies on posterior wall; Sympathic chain on sides of vertebral bodies**

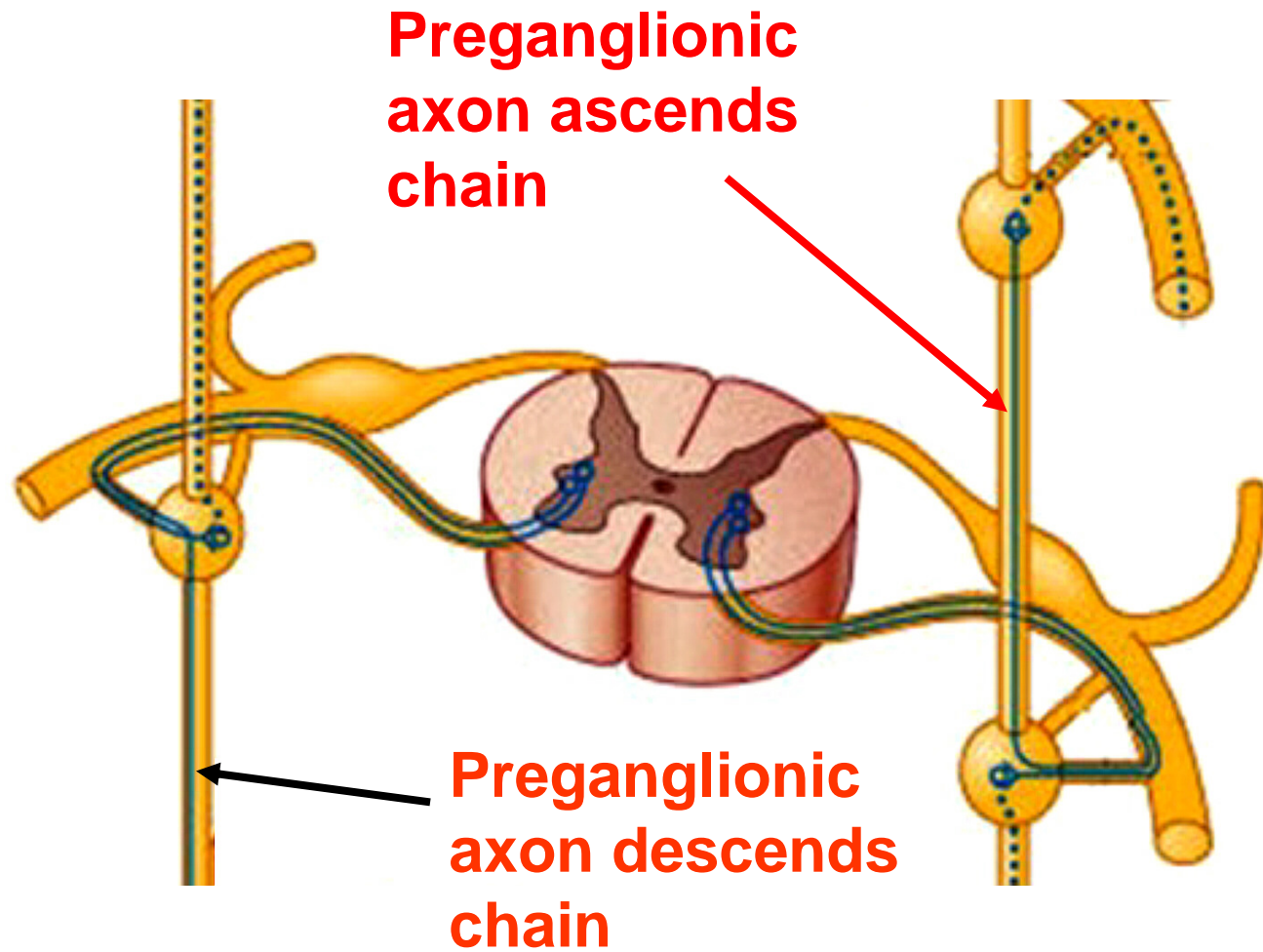


## II. ANATOMICAL ORGANIZATION SYMPATHETIC OUTFLOW OCCURS BY THREE PATHWAYS

1) COME OUT THORACIC AND LUMBAR VENTRAL ROOTS AND SYNAPSE IN GANGLION AT THAT LEVEL

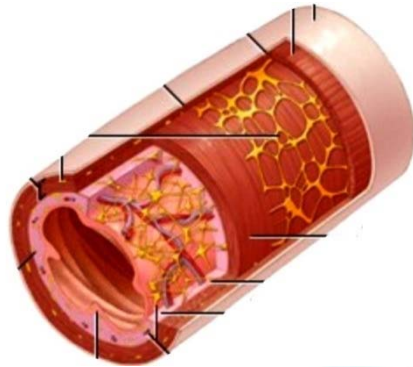


**2) SYMPATHETICS ASCEND OR DESCEND SYMPATHETIC CHAIN TO TERMINATE IN OTHER GANGLIA**

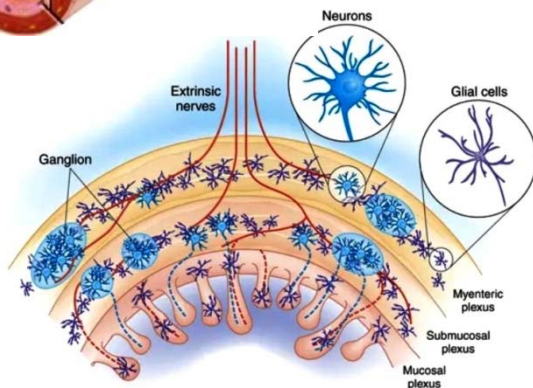


### 3) SYMPATHETICS LEAVE CHAIN WITHOUT SYNAPSING; FORM NERVES CALLED SPLANCHNIC NERVES - SYNAPSE IN PRE-AORTIC GANGLIA

Preganglionic axon leaves chain in Splanchnic nerve; nerves descending to abdomen; synapse on Pre-aortic ganglia, Gut

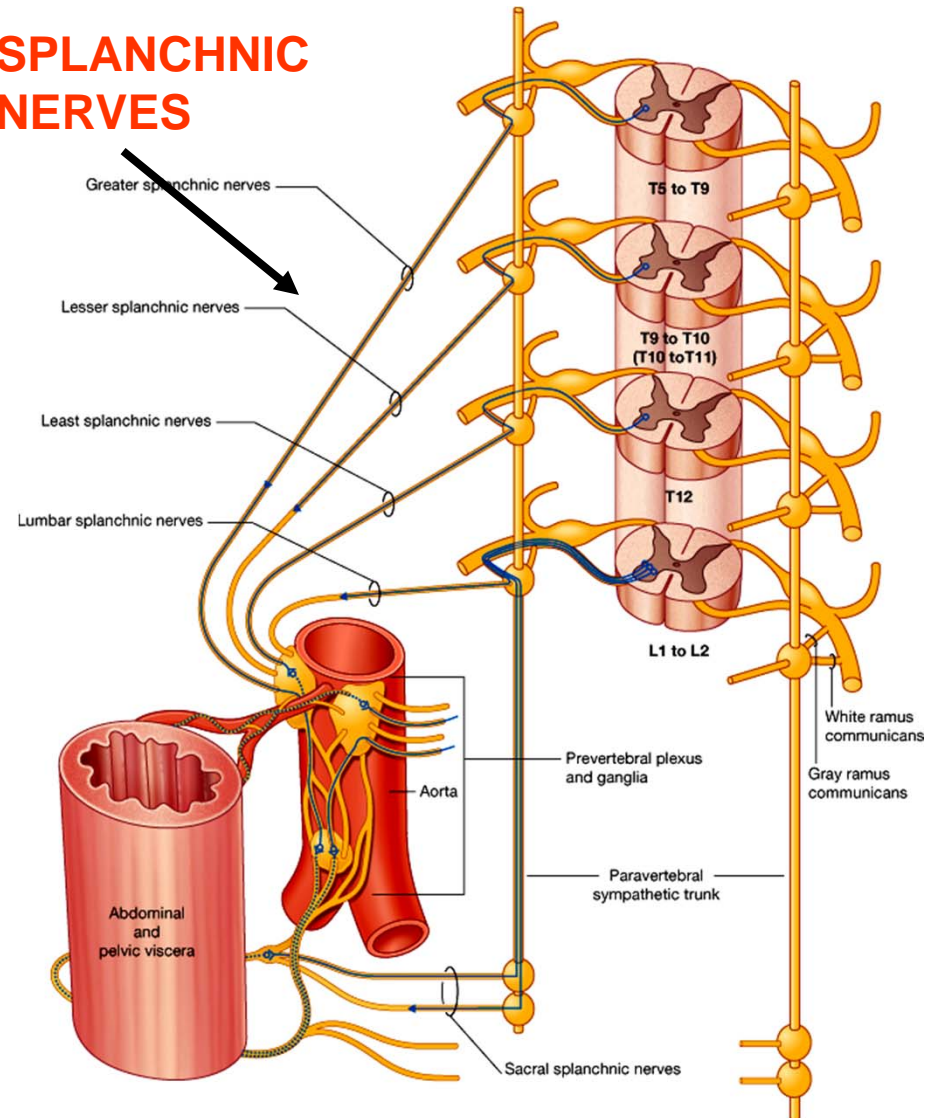


### GUT - ENTERIC NERVOUS SYSTEM



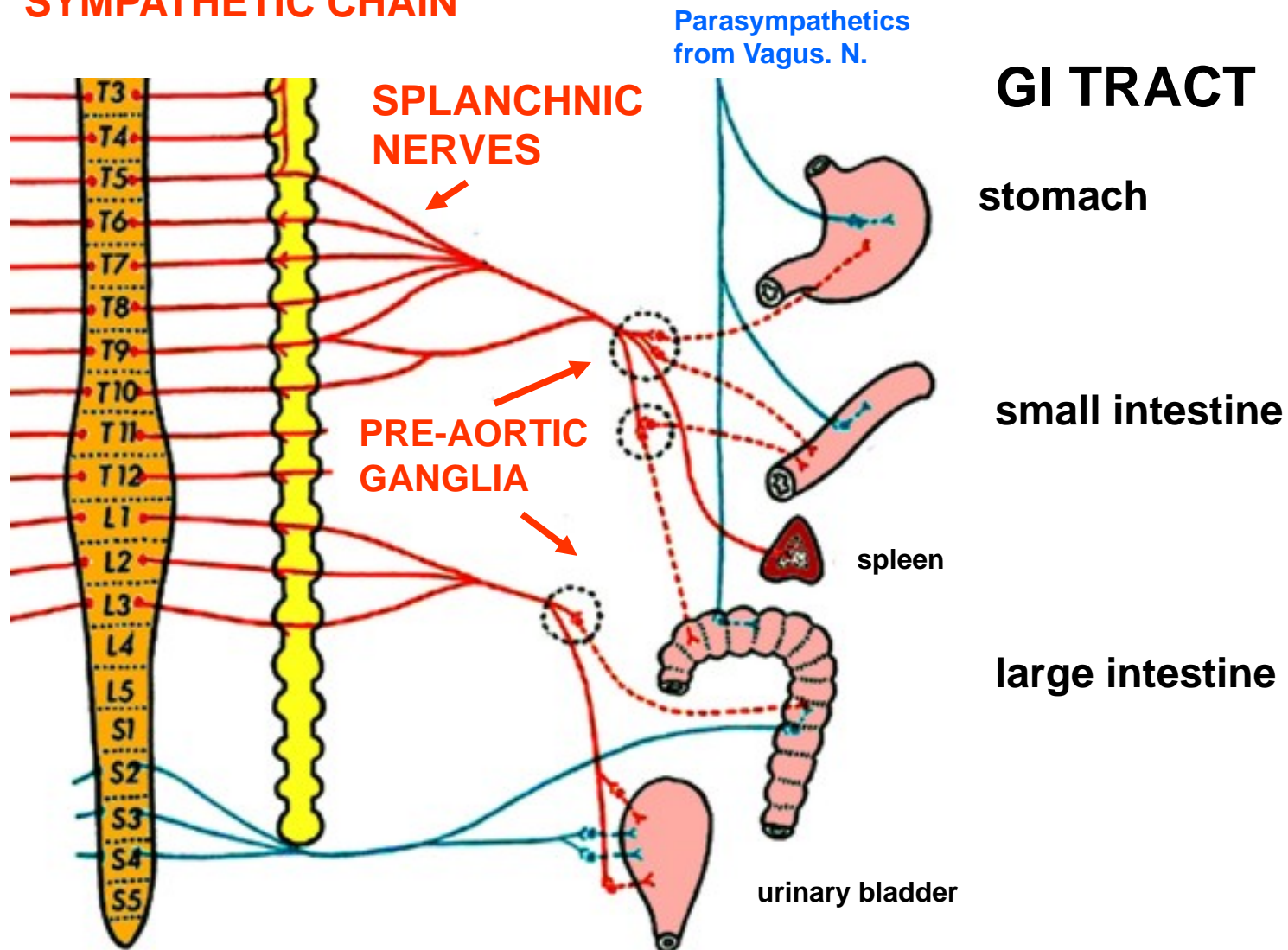
RECENT RESEARCH - INTERACTION BETWEEN IMMUNE SYSTEM AND NERVOUS SYSTEM: Rescigno, Nature 2008

### SPLANCHNIC NERVES



# SPLANCHNIC NERVES: SYMPATHETICS TO INTERNAL ORGANS IN ABDOMEN, PELVIS - COVERED IN SPRING

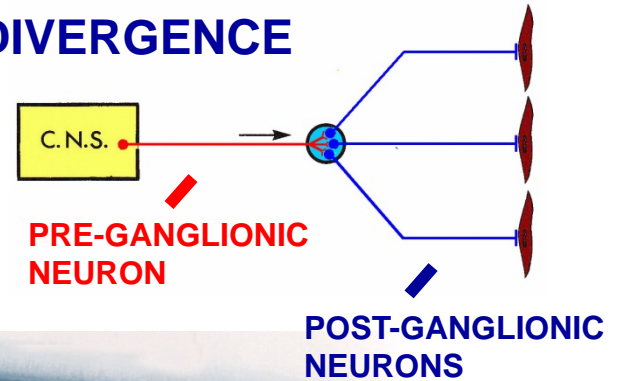
## SYMPATHETIC CHAIN





# FUNCTION OF COMPLEXITY, 2 NEURON ARC: DIVERGENCE

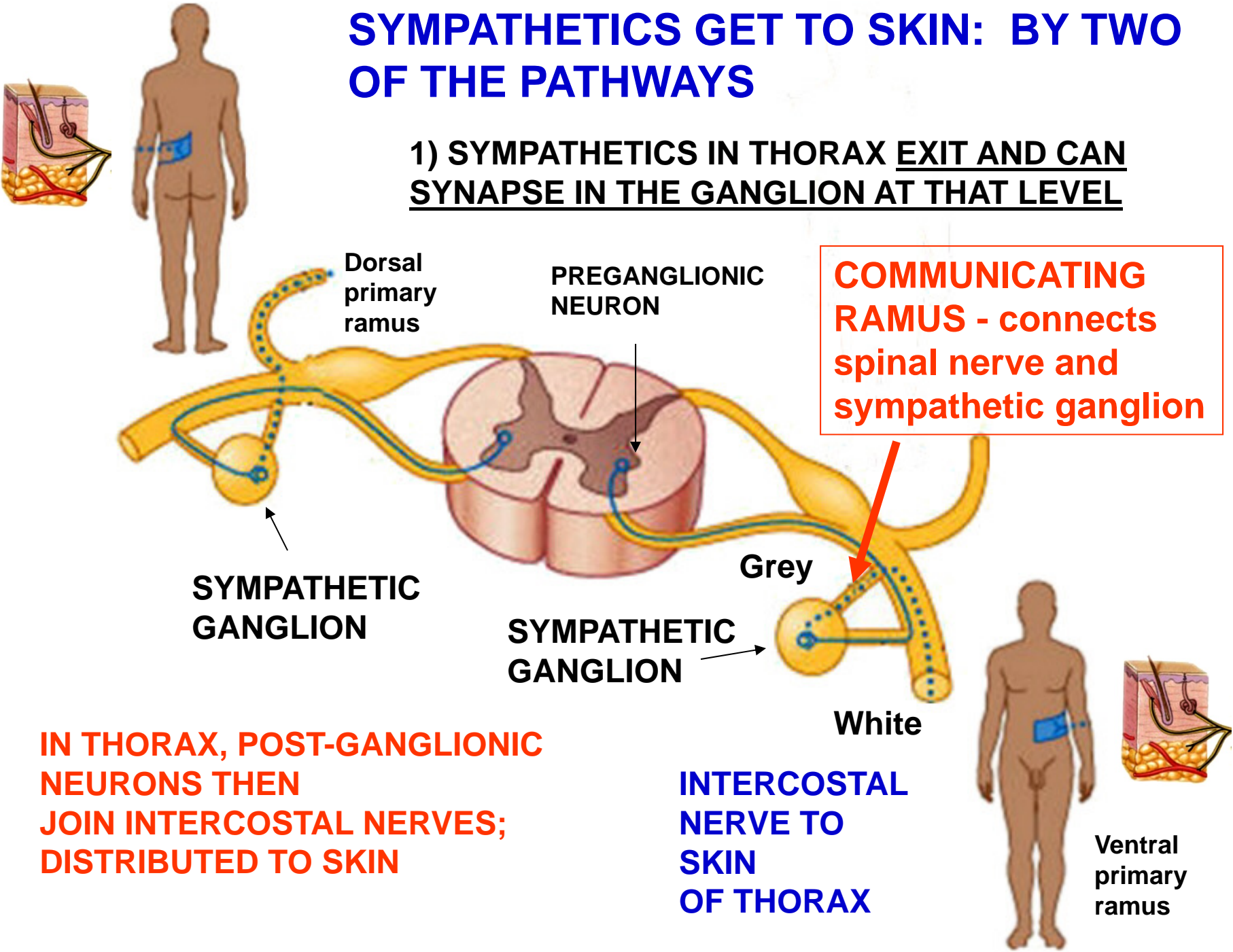
ONE PRE-GANGLIONIC NEURON ACTIVATES MANY POST-GANGLIONIC NEURONS

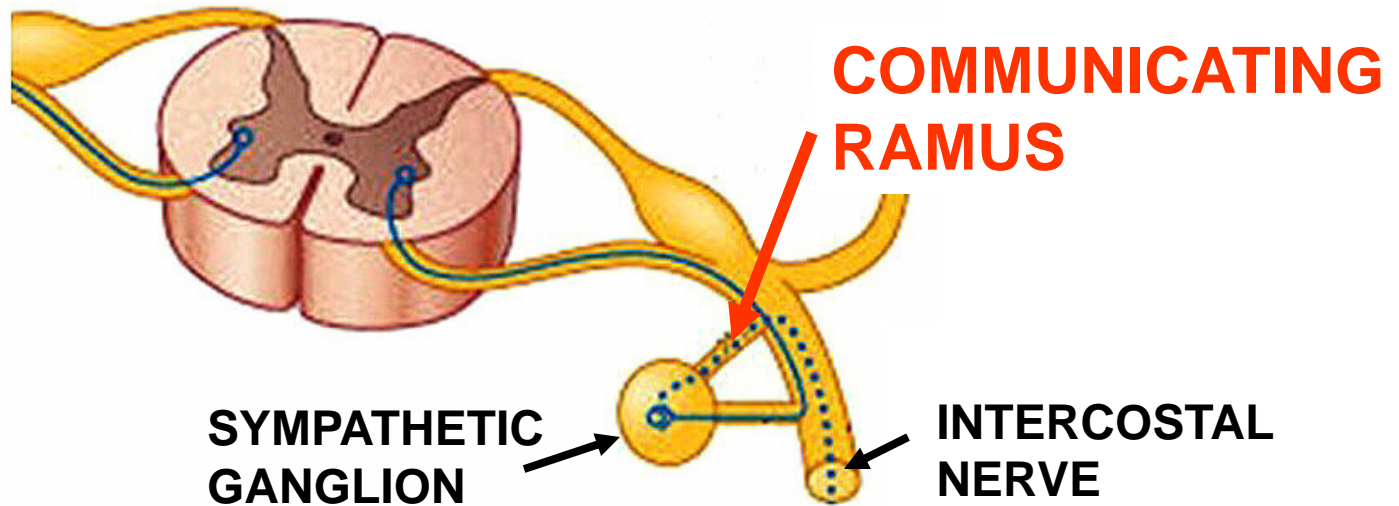
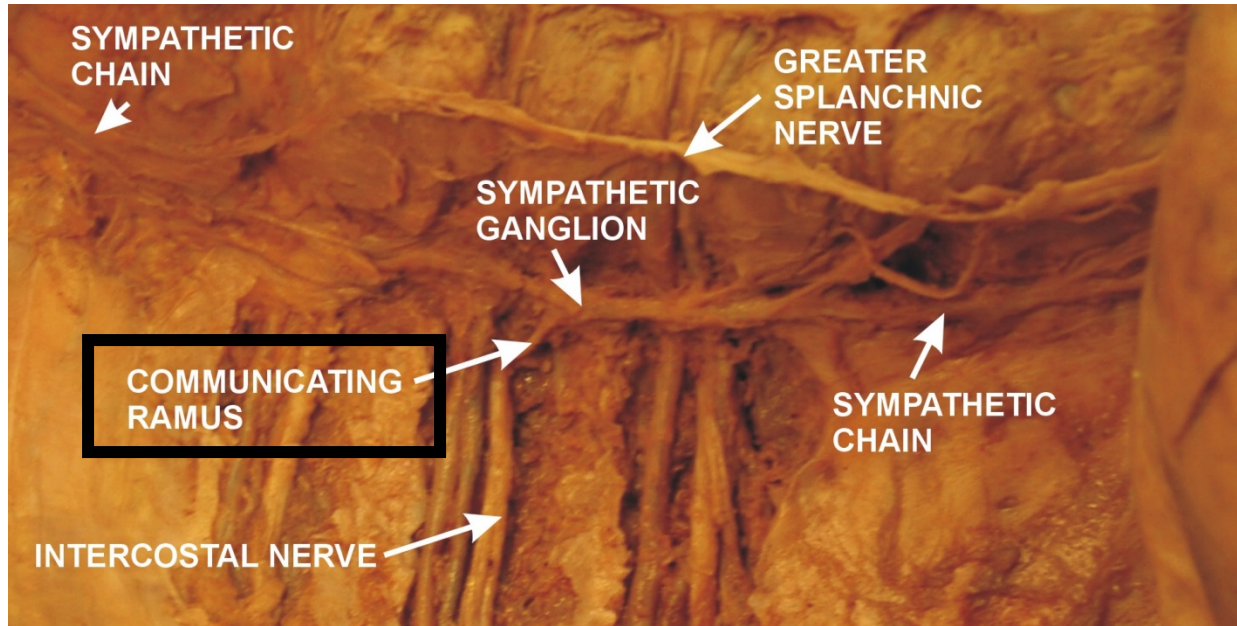


MIDNIGHT RIDE OF PAUL REVERE - 'British are coming, British are coming....'

# SYMPATHETICS GET TO SKIN: BY TWO OF THE PATHWAYS

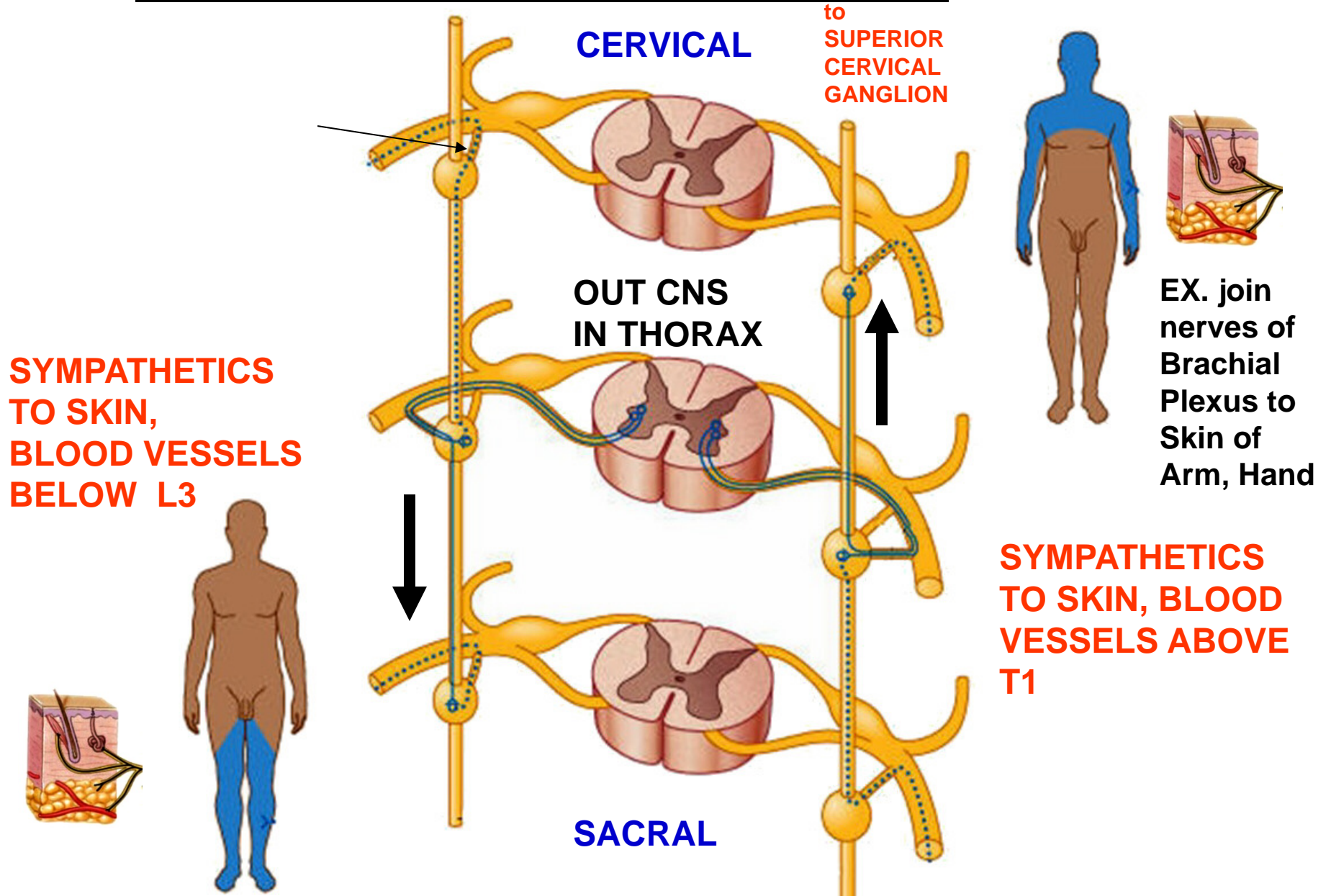
1) SYMPATHETICS IN THORAX EXIT AND CAN SYNAPSE IN THE GANGLION AT THAT LEVEL







## 2) SYMPATHETICS TO SKIN - IN THORAX CAN COME OUT AND ASCEND OR DESCEND CHAIN OF GANGLIA

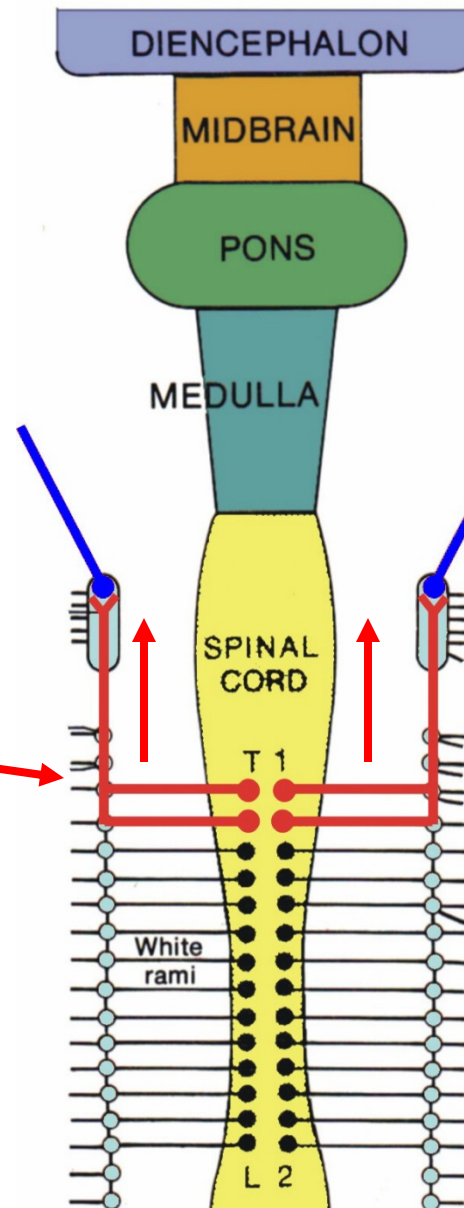


# SYMPATHETICS TO HEAD

## PATHWAY TO HEAD -

1) Neuron 1 (Preganglionic neuron) in spinal cord at T1, T2

- leaves and ascends sympathetic chain



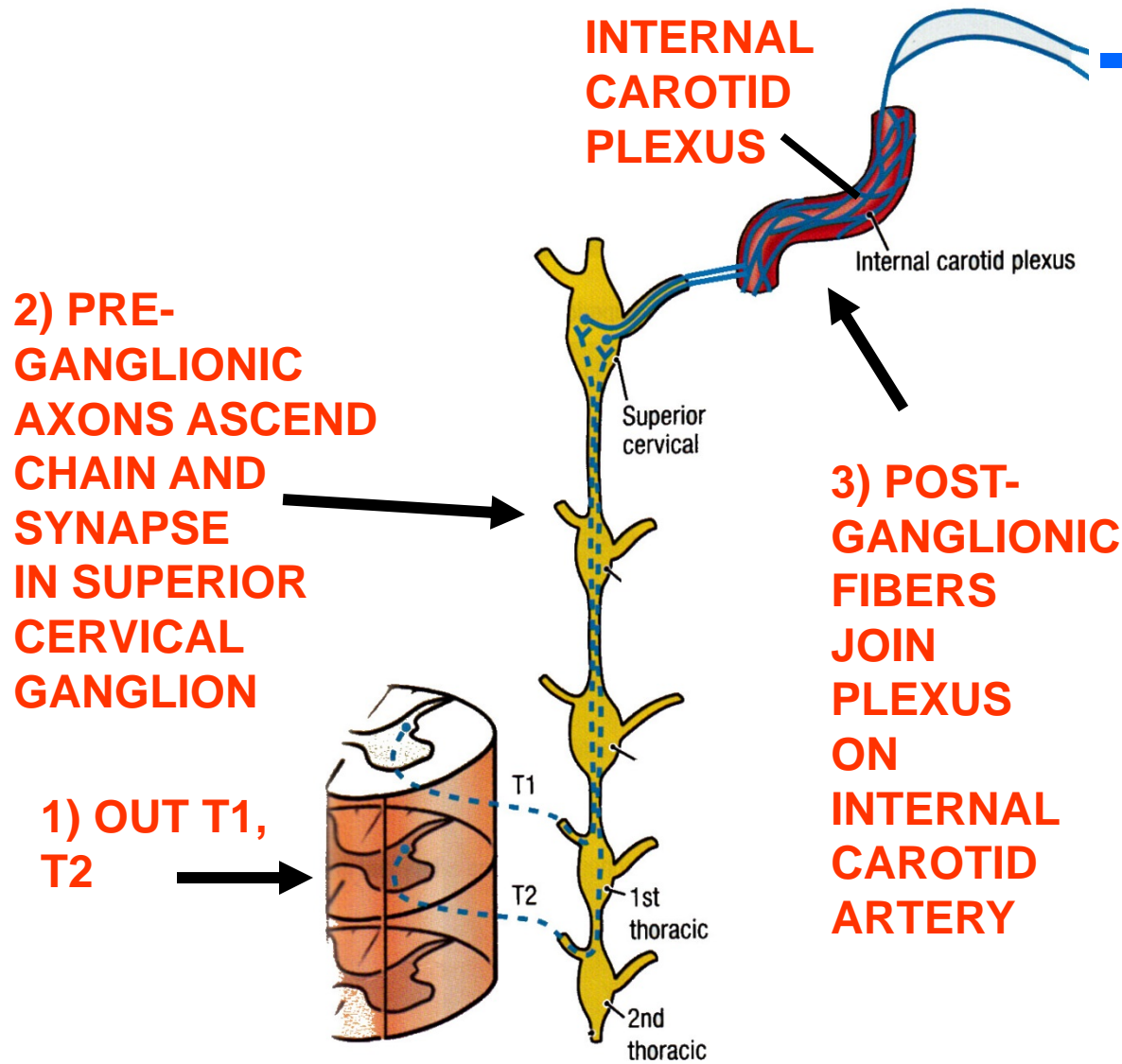
to Target Organ

Joins Plexus on Internal and External Carotid Arteries in mostly Unnamed branches

2) Neuron 2 (Postganglionic neuron) In Superior Cervical Ganglia



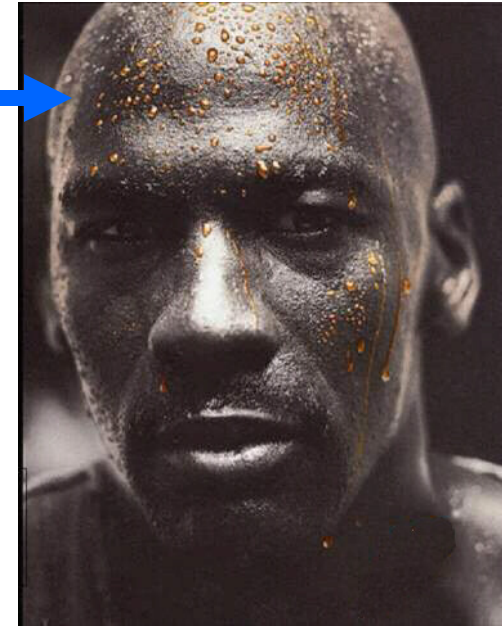
# SYMPATHETICS TO SKIN OF HEAD



**2) PRE-GANGLIONIC AXONS ASCEND CHAIN AND SYNAPSE IN SUPERIOR CERVICAL GANGLION**

**1) OUT T1, T2**

**3) POST-GANGLIONIC FIBERS JOIN PLEXUS ON INTERNAL CAROTID ARTERY**



**4) POST-GANGLIONIC FIBERS END IN SKIN OF FACE; MICHAEL JORDAN SWEATS**

# LESIONS OF SYMPATHETICS PRODUCE SYMPTOMS IN EYE: HORNER'S SYNDROME

## HORNER'S SYNDROME



**HORNER'S SYNDROME** - damage to Sympathetic pathways:  
symptoms involve structures of eye and head -

**SYMPTOMS** -

**MIOSIS** - pupillary constriction

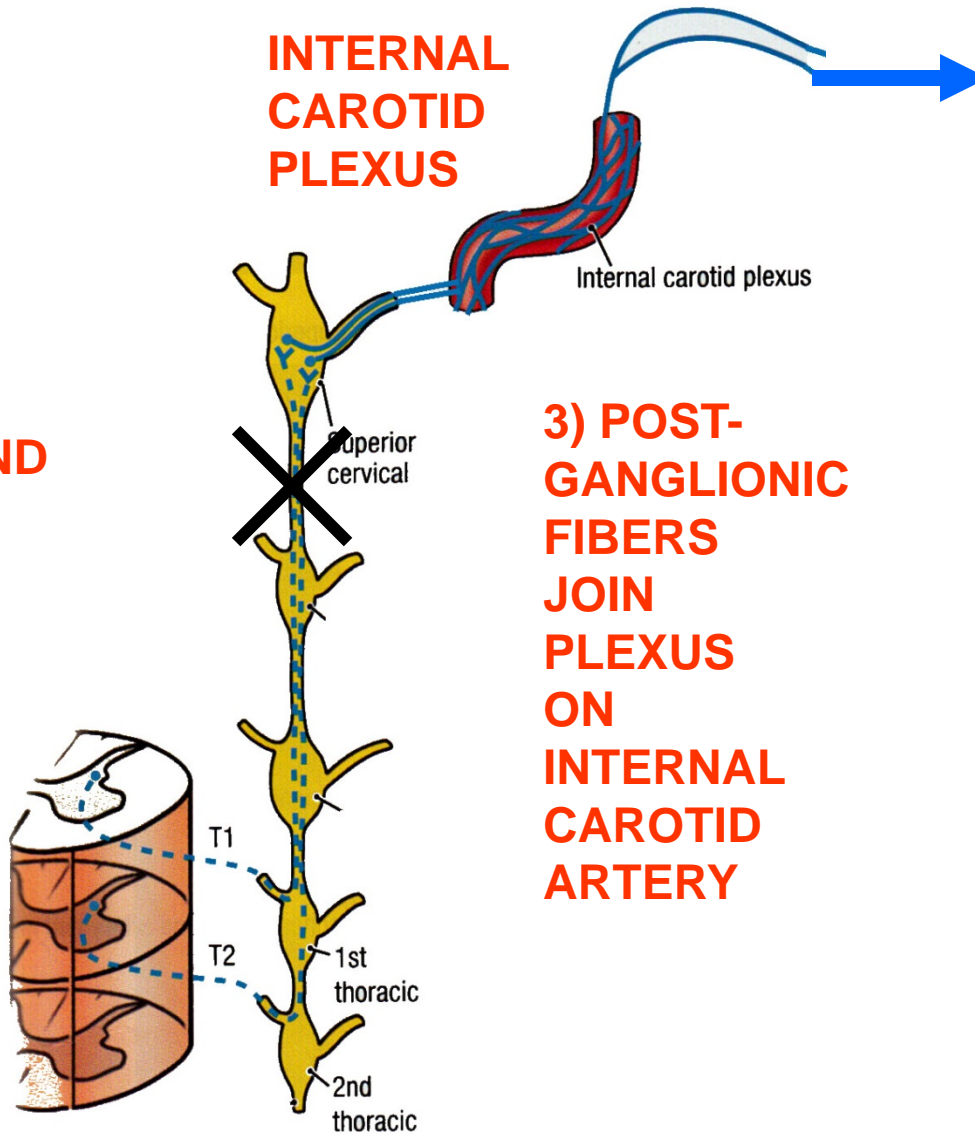
**PTOSIS** - drooping eyelid

**ANHYDROSIS** - lack of sweating

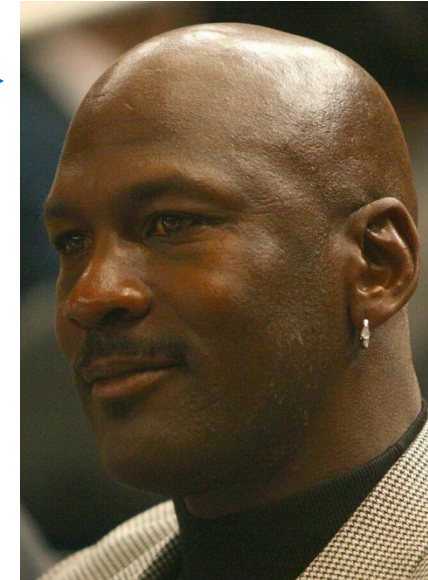
# 1) ANHYDROSIS - LESION TO SYMPATHETICS BLOCKS SWEATING

2) PRE-GANGLIONIC AXONS ASCEND CHAIN AND SYNAPSE IN SUPERIOR CERVICAL GANGLION

1) OUT T1, T2



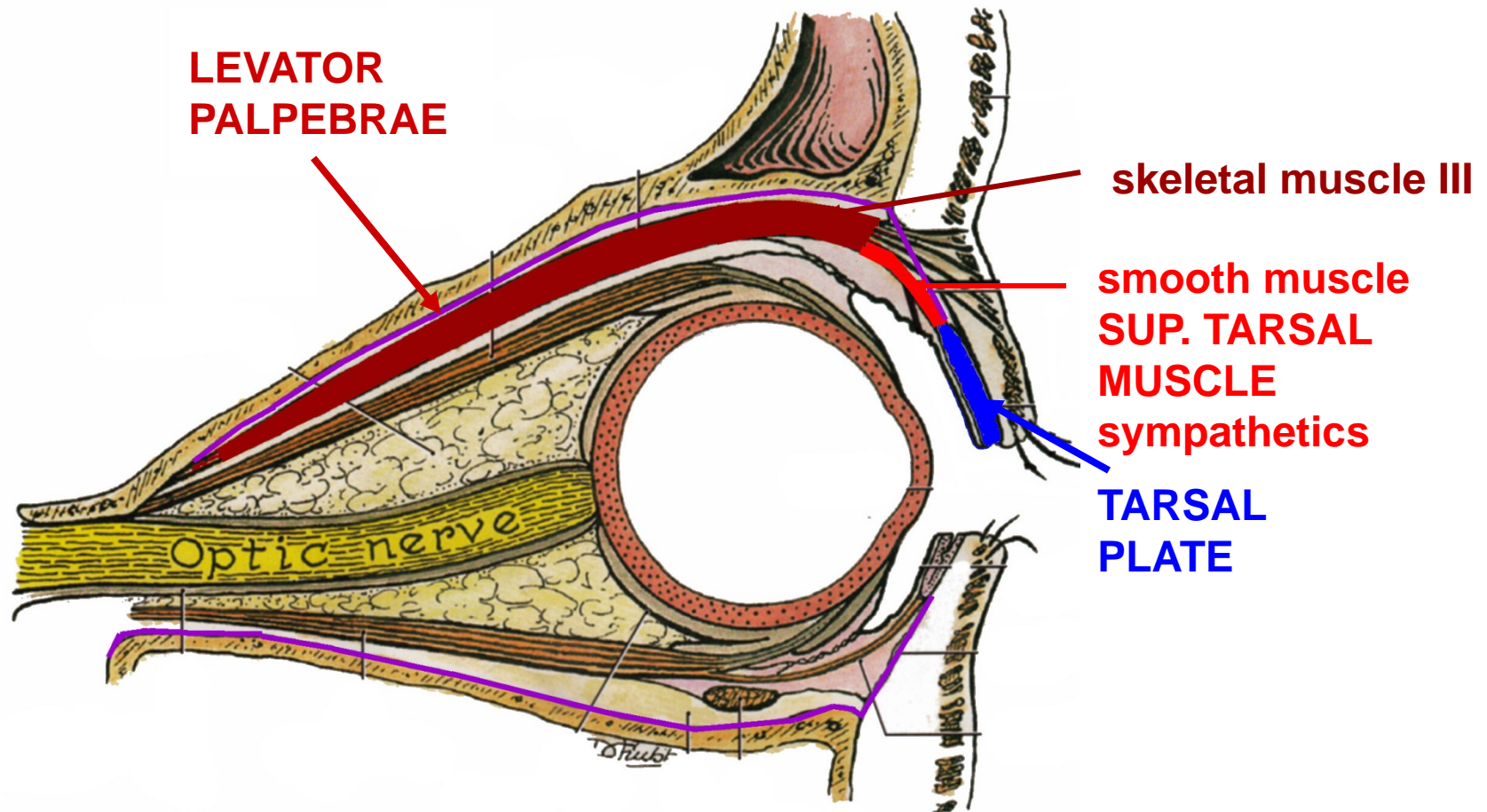
3) POST-GANGLIONIC FIBERS JOIN PLEXUS ON INTERNAL CAROTID ARTERY



LACK OF SWEATING = ANHYDROSIS

CAN LESION SYMPATHETIC CHAIN (EX. PANCOST TUMOR OF LUNG)

## 2) PTOSIS: MUSCLE OF EYELID: LEVATOR PALPEBRAE SUPERIORIS



**LEVATOR PALPEBRAE SUPERIORIS MUSCLE - ORIGIN FROM TENDINOUS RING - COMPOSED OF SKELETAL (CN III) & SMOOTH (SYMPATHETICS) MUSCLE PARTS**

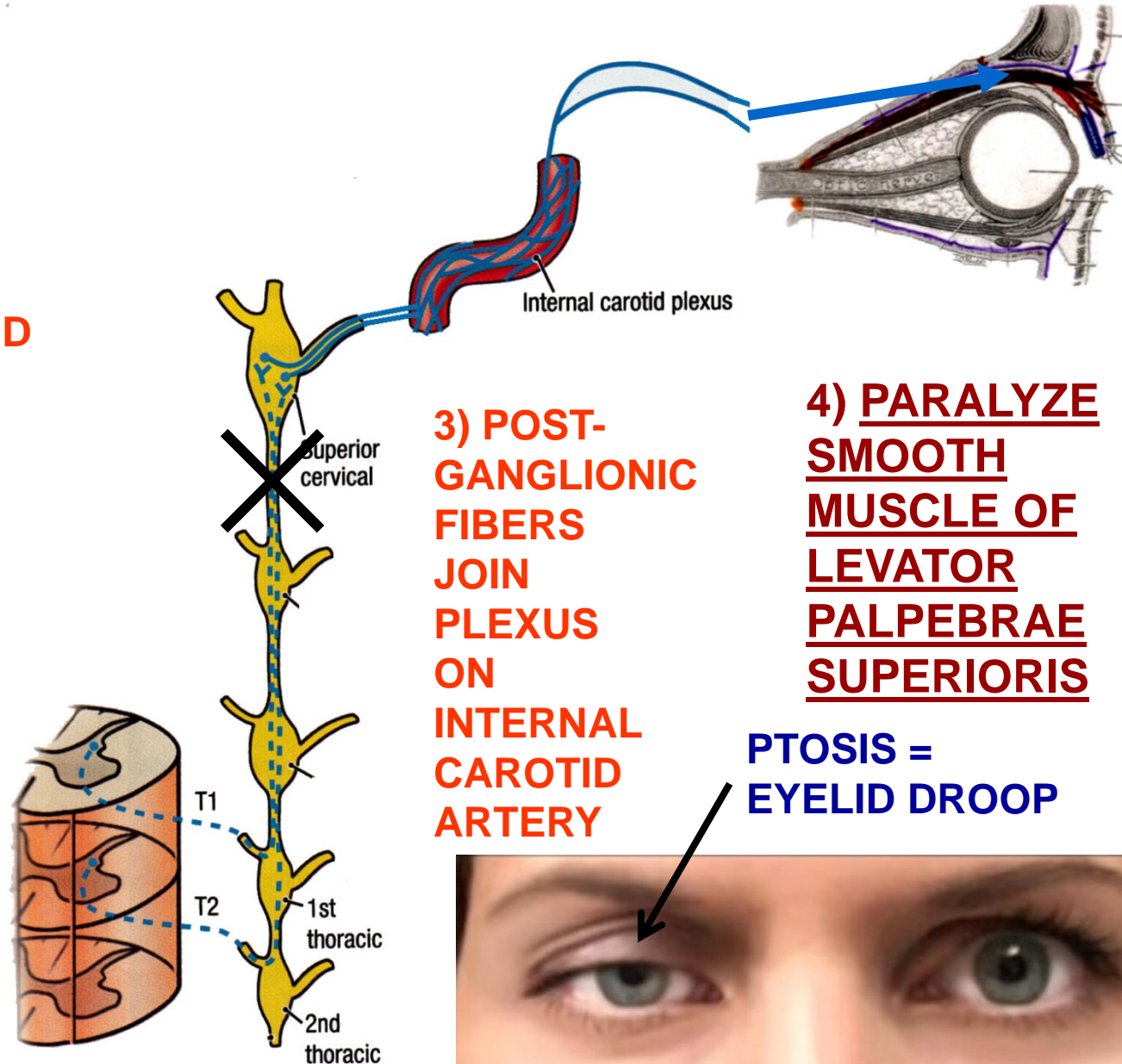
**DAMAGE INNERVATION PTOSIS = DROOPING EYELID**



## 2) PTOSIS - DAMAGE PATHWAY OF SYMPATHETICS TO EYE

2) **PRE-GANGLIONIC AXONS ASCEND CHAIN AND SYNAPSE IN SUPERIOR CERVICAL GANGLION**

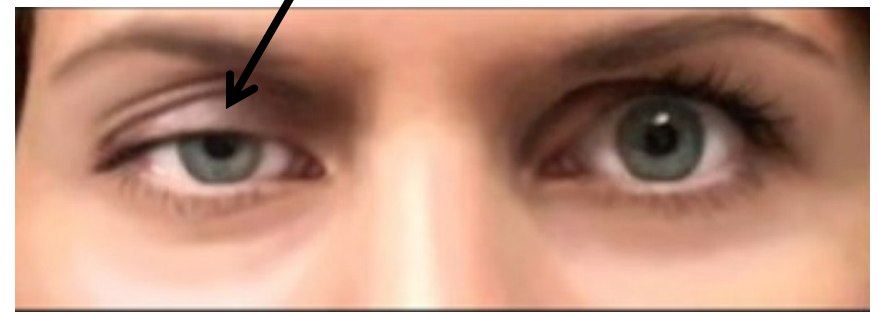
1) **OUT T1, T2**



3) **POST-GANGLIONIC FIBERS JOIN PLEXUS ON INTERNAL CAROTID ARTERY**

4) **PARALYZE SMOOTH MUSCLE OF LEVATOR PALPEBRAE SUPERIORIS**

**PTOSIS = EYELID DROOP**

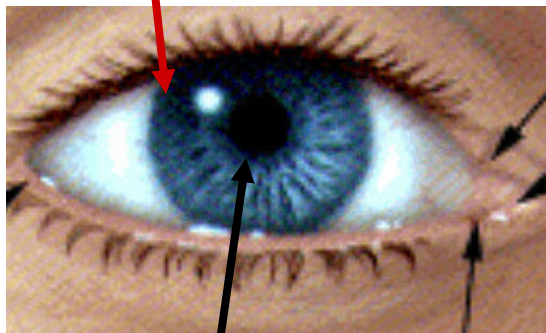




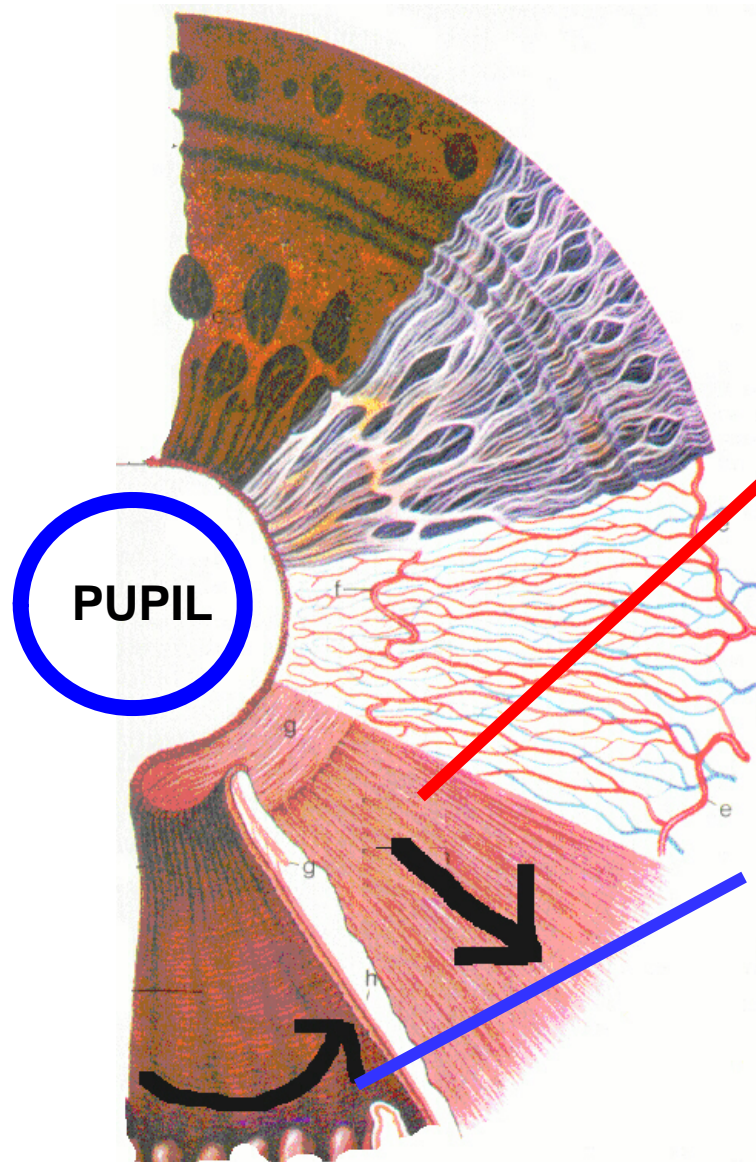
### 3) MIOSIS - CONSTRICTED PUPIL

IRIS - PIGMENTED,  
CONTRACTILE LAYER  
SURROUNDING PUPIL

IRIS - PIGMENTED



PUPIL



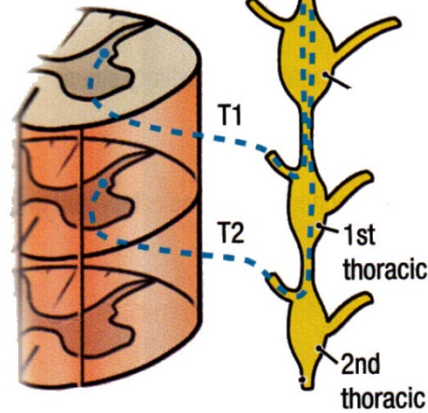
DILATOR  
PUPIL M.-  
RADIAL  
SMOOTH  
MUSCLE;  
SYMPA-  
THETICS

CONSTRUCTOR  
PUPIL M. -  
CIRCULAR  
SMOOTH  
MUSCLE;  
PARA-  
SYMPATHETICS  
III

**3) MIOSIS -  
DAMAGE  
PATHWAY OF  
SYMPATHETICS  
TO EYE**

**2) PRE-  
GANGLIONIC  
AXONS ASCEND  
CHAIN AND  
SYNAPSE  
IN SUPERIOR  
CERVICAL  
GANGLION**

**1) OUT T1,  
T2**

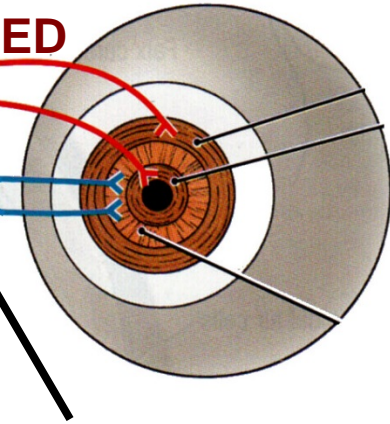


**CN III - OCULOMOTOR  
CONSTRICTOR IS UNOPPOSED**

**INTERNAL  
CAROTID  
PLEXUS**



**3) POST-  
GANGLIONIC  
FIBERS  
JOIN  
PLEXUS  
ON  
INTERNAL  
CAROTID  
ARTERY**



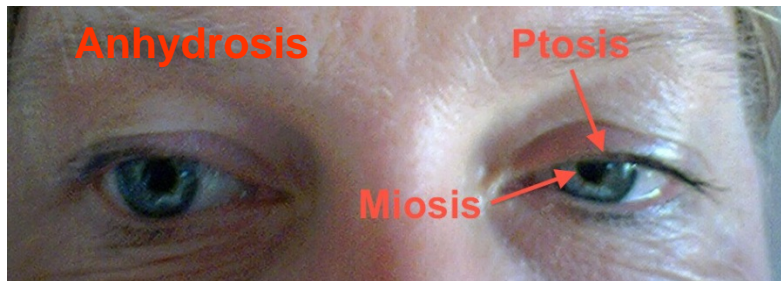
**4) PARALYZE  
DILATOR  
PUPILLAE  
(RADIAL  
SMOOTH  
MUSCLE)**

**PUPIL IS  
CONSTRICTED  
(MIOSIS) -  
CONSTRICTOR  
INNERVATED BY  
OCULOMOTOR NERVE  
(III)**

# LESIONS OF SYMPATHETICS PRODUCE SYMPTOMS IN EYE: HORNER'S SYNDROME

HORNER'S SYNDROME - damage to Sympathetic pathways: symptoms involve structures of eye and head -

## HORNER'S SYNDROME



## CLINICAL

CAN DAMAGE SYMPATHETIC  
CHAIN IN NECK; SHOW  
SYMPTOMS IN EYE AND FACE

## SYMPTOMS -

- 1) MIOSIS - pupillary constriction;  
PARALYSIS OF PUPILLARY  
DILATOR MUSCLE
- 2) PTOSIS - drooping eyelid;  
PARALYSIS OF SMOOTH MUSCLE  
PART OF LEVATOR PALPEBRAE  
SUPERIORIS
- 3) ANHYDROSIS - lack of sweating;  
LOSS OF INNERVATION OF SWEAT  
GLANDS

## SUMMARY CHART: HORNER'S SYNDROME

Symptom	Structure innervated	Damage
<u>Anhydrosis</u> (lack of sweating)	Sweat glands in skin	lack of sweating in skin (ex. forehead)
<u>Ptosis</u> (eyelid droop)	<u>Levator Palpebrae Superioris</u> - <u>sympathetics</u> to Smooth muscle part	<u>Levator</u> lifts upper eyelid; damage produce eyelid droop
<u>Miosis</u> (constricted pupil)	<u>Pupillary</u> dilator muscle	Damage paralyzes Dilator muscle; pupil is constricted (Constrictor <u>pupillae</u> muscle is intact)



**HYPOTHALAMUS**

DIENCEPHALON

MIDBRAIN

POIS

MEDULLA

SPINAL CORD

T 1

L 2

White rami

**HYPOTHALAMO-SPINAL TRACT**

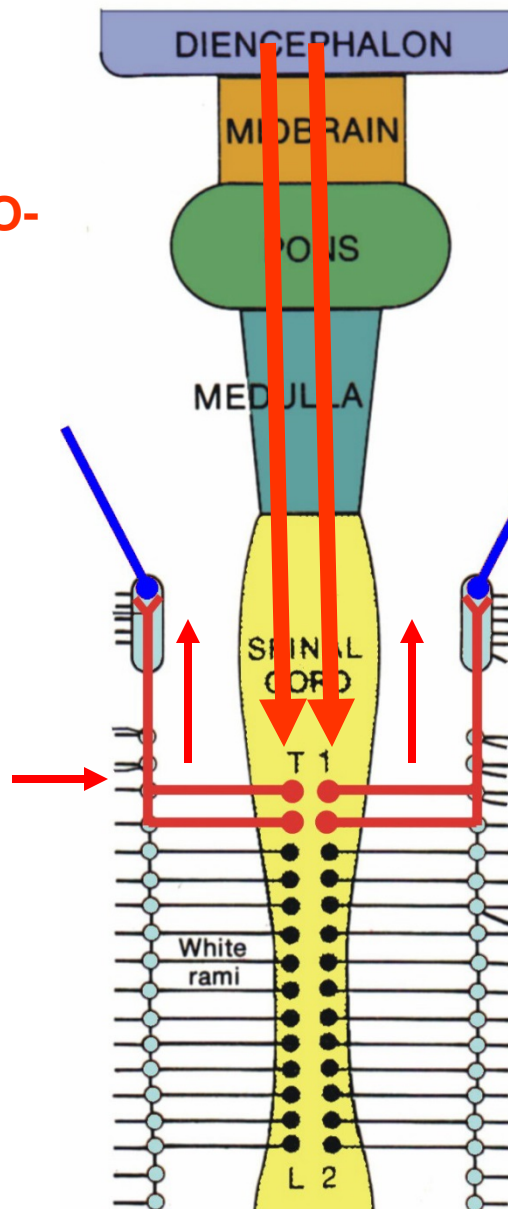
**LESIONS CAN OCCUR IN MANY PLACES IN PATHWAY**

**to Target Organ**

**PATHWAY TO HEAD -**

**1) Neuron 1 (Preganglionic neuron) in spinal cord at T1, T2**

**2) Neuron 2 (Postganglionic neuron) In Superior Cervical Ganglia**



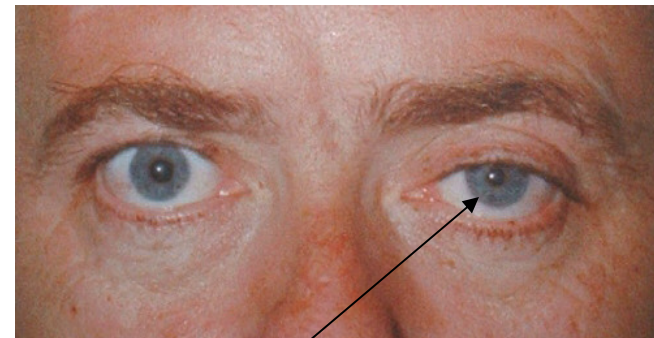
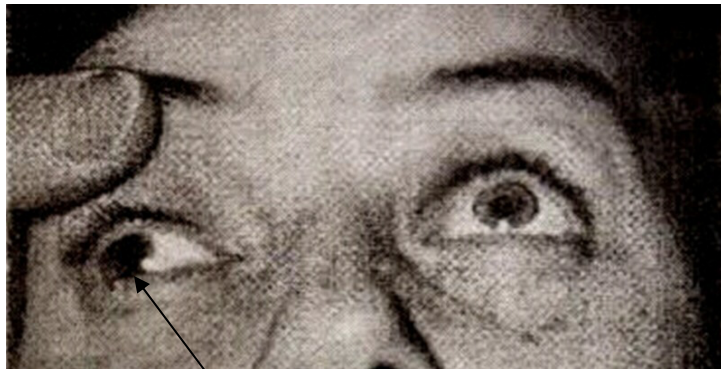
Ptosis (drooping of the eyelid)

**PTOSIS = DROOPING EYELID; CAN BE SIGN OF DAMAGE TO OCULOMOTOR NERVE (III) OR SYMPATHETICS**



SKELETAL MUSCLE PART

SMOOTH MUSCLE PART



**OCULOMOTOR NERVE PALSY**

other symptoms:

- Pupil is dilated - denervate Pupillary constrictor (Mydriasis)
- Also affect **Eye movements**
- Accommodation

**SYMPATHETICS - HORNER'S SYNDROME -**

- Miosis - denervate Pupillary dilator; constricted pupil
- Anhidrosis - lack of sweating

**\*\***

**SYMPTOM – EYELID DROOP + CONSTRICTED PUPIL**

## SUMMARY CHART: HORNER'S SYNDROME VS OCULOMOTOR PALSY \*\*\*

Structure	Horner's Syndrome	Oculomotor Palsy (nerve damage)
Upper eyelid	<u>Ptosis (eyelid droop)</u> - paralyze Smooth muscle part of <u>Levator Palpebrae Superioris</u>	<u>Ptosis (eyelid droop)</u> - paralyze Skeletal muscle part of <u>Levator Palpebrae Superioris</u>
Pupil of eye	Pupil constricted ( <u>Miosis</u> ) - <u>Pupillary Dilator</u> muscle paralyzed; <u>Pupillary constrictor</u> muscle intact	Pupil dilated ( <u>Mydriasis</u> ) - <u>pupillary constrictor</u> muscle paralyzed; Dilator muscle is intact
Sweat glands in skin	<u>Anhydrosis</u> - lack of sweating in skin (ex. forehead)	No effect ( <u>parasympathetics</u> do not innervate skin)

**also: Eye movements - affect by Oculomotor Palsy; no effect if damage Sympathetics.**