

## E-Pearl of the Week

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### Don't get caught with a "bovine arch"

A common misnomer in the medical literature is the "bovine aortic arch," referring to an arrangement of the aortic arch and great vessels seen in cattle. The most common branching pattern in the human aortic arch consists of separate origins for the innominate, left common carotid, and left subclavian arteries. There are two variations of this pattern that are often erroneously referred to as a "bovine arch" pattern:

1. A common trunk for the innominate and left carotid arteries;
2. The left carotid as a branch of the innominate artery

With both of these variations, the left subclavian artery originates directly from the aorta. The typical branching pattern in cattle is quite different and consists of one single great vessel originating from the aorta, the brachiocephalic trunk, which gives rise to the bilateral subclavian arteries and to a bicarotid trunk.

Layton KF, Kallmes DF, Croft HJ, Lindell EP, Cox VS. Bovine aortic arch variant in humans: clarification of a common misnomer. *AJNR* 2006;27:1541–1542.

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**Disclosure:** Dr. Overman is a member of the Resident & Fellow Team and Podcast Committee for the *Neurology*