

## Arteries of the Upper Limb (Shoulder, Arms & Hands)

The blood supply to the upper limb (shoulder, arm and hand) starts as the subclavian arteries in the shoulders.

As each artery passes into the axilla (armpit) it becomes the:

> **axillary artery** supplies blood, through several small branches, to the axilla, chest wall, shoulder joint, scapula, and regional muscles. Axillary artery branches include:

- **supreme thoracic artery** supplies blood to the upper chest.
- **thoracoacromial trunk** supplies blood to the deltoid and pectoral region.
- **lateral thoracic artery** supplies blood to the lateral thorax (chest wall).
- **subscapular artery** supplies blood to the muscles of the scapula and latissimus dorsi.
- **anterior humeral circumflex** and **posterior humeral circumflex artery** supply blood to the head of the humerus, deltoid and teres minor muscle.

> As the **axillary artery** emerges from the axilla into the arm it is now called the **brachial artery**.

> **brachial artery** runs down medial humerus to supply blood to anterior flexor muscles.

> **deep brachial artery** branches off to supply blood to the triceps. At the elbow, small branches anastomose around the elbow joint. Below the elbow, the brachial artery splits into the radial and ulnar arteries.

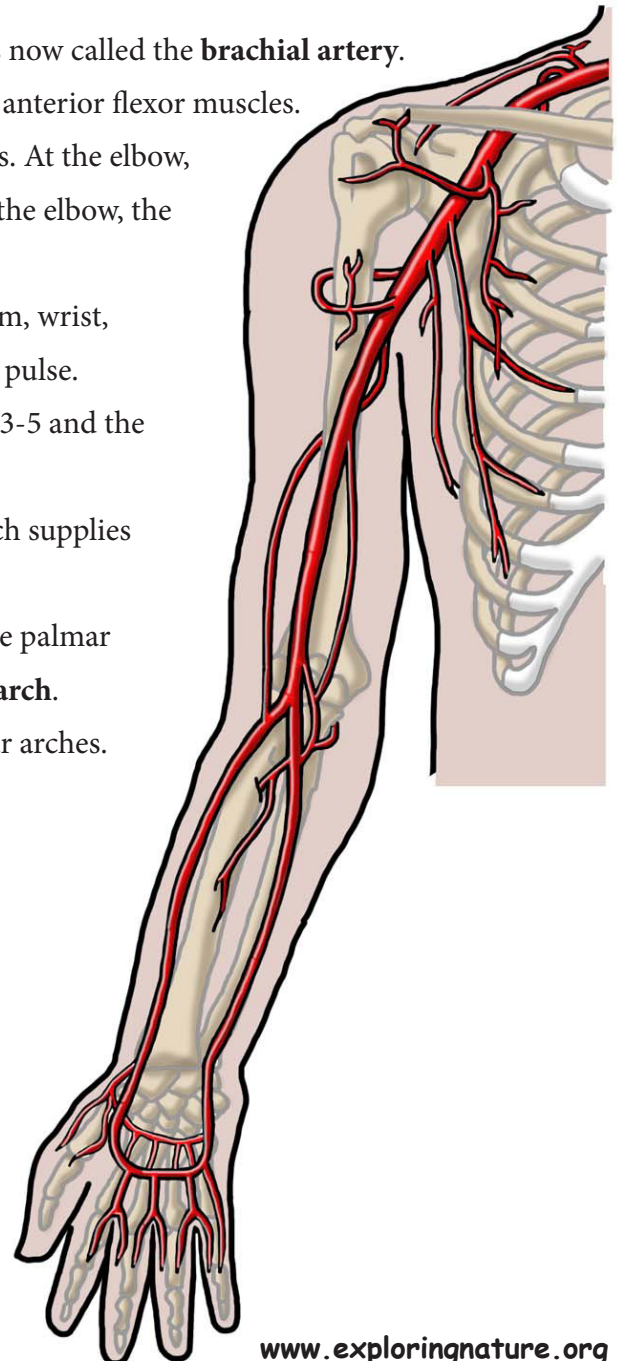
> **radial artery** supplies blood to the lateral muscles of the forearm, wrist, thumb and later half of the index finger. It creates the wrist pulse.

> **ulnar artery** supplies blood to the medial forearm, and fingers 3-5 and the medial half of the index finger.

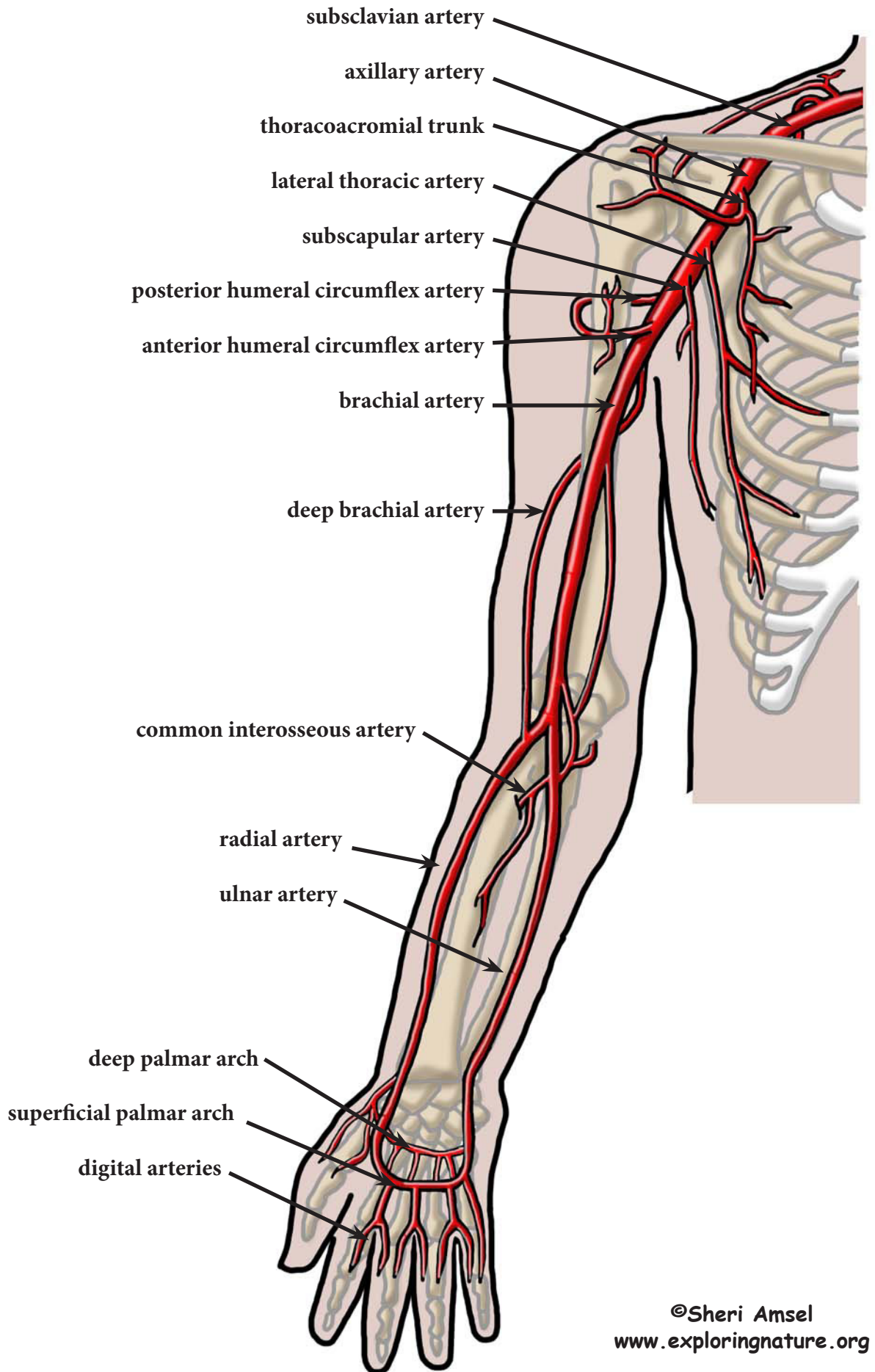
> The ulnar artery gives off the **common interosseus artery** which supplies blood to the to the deep flexors and extensors.

> In the palm, the radial and ulnar arteries anastomose to form the palmar arches. The **superficial palmar arch** and the **deep palmar arch**.

> The **metacarpal artery** and **digital arteries** come off the palmar arches.



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