Behind the dorsum sellæ is a shallow depression, the **clivus**, which slopes obliquely backward, and is continuous with the groove on the basilar portion of the occipital bone; it supports the upper part of the pons.

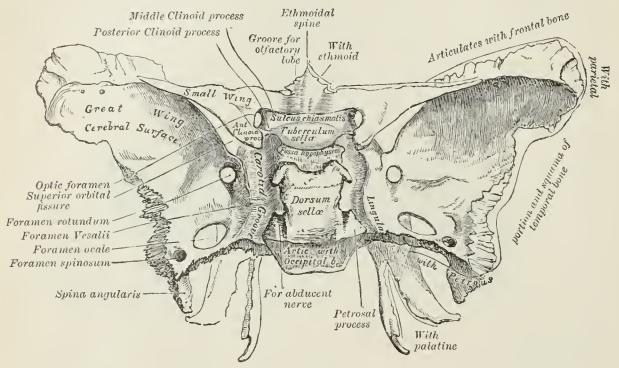


Fig. 145.—Sphenoid bone. Upper surface.

The lateral surfaces of the body are united with the great wings and the medial pterygoid plates. Above the attachment of each great wing is a broad groove, curved something like the italic letter f; it lodges the internal carotid artery and the cavernous sinus, and is named the carotid groove. Along the posterior part

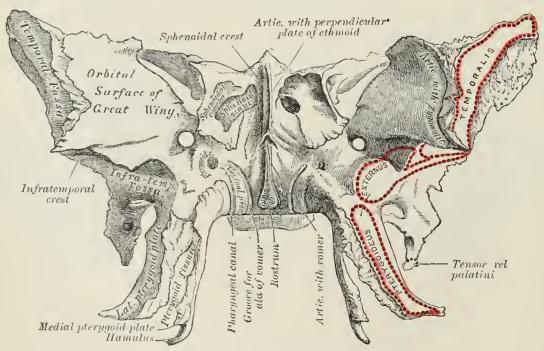


Fig. 146.—Sphenoid bone. Anterior and inferior surfaces.

of the lateral margin of this groove, in the angle between the body and great wing, is a ridge of bone, called the lingula.

The posterior surface, quadrilateral in form (Fig. 147), is joined, during infancy and adolescence, to the basilar part of the occipital bone by a plate of cartilage.