Surface anatomy of the breast in women

Although breasts vary in size, they are normally positioned on the thoracic wall between ribs II and VI and overlie the pectoralis major muscles. Each mammary gland extends superolaterally around the lower margin of the pectoralis major muscle and enters the axilla (Fig. 3.106). This portion of the gland is the axillary tail or axillary process. The positions of the nipple and areola vary relative to the chest wall depending on breast size.

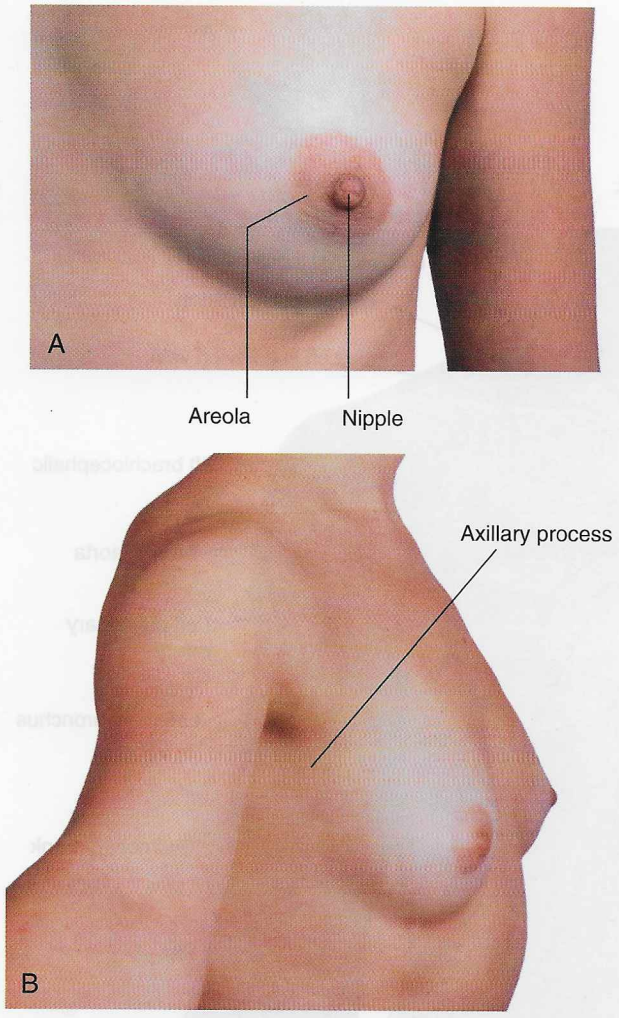

Fig. 3.106 **A.** Close-up view of nipple and surrounding areola of the breast. **B.** Lateral view of the chest wall of a woman showing the axillary process of the breast.

Visualizing structures at the TIV/V vertebral level

The TIV/V vertebral level is a transverse plane that passes through the sternal angle on the anterior chest wall and the intervertebral disc between TIV and TV vertebrae posteriorly. This plane can easily be located, because the joint between the manubrium of the sternum and the body of the sternum forms a distinct bony protuberance that can be palpated. At the TIV/V level (Fig. 3.107):

- The costal cartilage of rib II articulates with the sternum.
- The superior mediastinum is separated from the inferior mediastinum.
- The ascending aorta ends and the arch of the aorta begins.
- The arch of the aorta ends and the thoracic aorta begins.
- The trachea bifurcates.

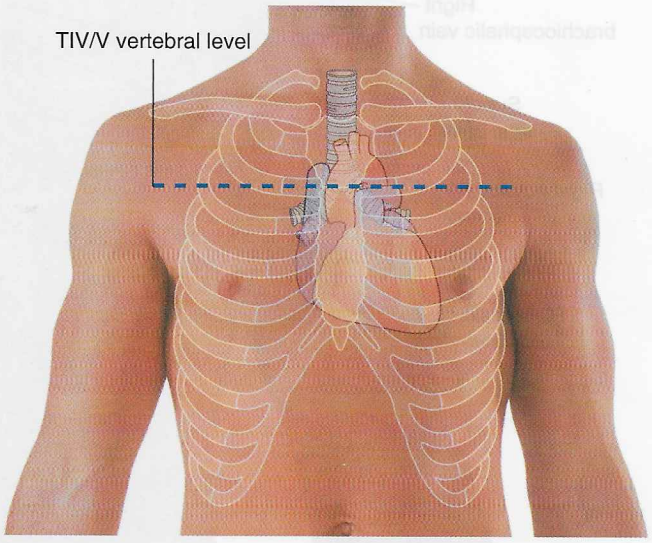

Fig. 3.107 Anterior view of the chest wall of a man showing the locations of various structures related to the TIV/V level.