The diaphragm forms an anatomical barrier between the thoracic cavity and the abdominal cavity. The diaphragm is primarily skeletal muscle. Functionally it is important because it is responsible for most breathing at rest. It is dome shaped. In humans the origin of the diaphragm is along its outer margin to the deep surface of the bony thorax, costal cartilage of the ribs 7 to 12, sternum, and lumbar vertebrae 1 through 3. The insertion is at the central tendon. The phrenic nerve serves the diaphragm.

The central tendon is the insertion of the diaphragm. It is an aponeurosis and unusual in that it does not attach to a bone, but rather connects the central portions of the diaphragm. It is relatively clear and if a probe is placed on one side, the probe can be seen from the other side. Remember that the phrenic nerve passes through the central tendon on both sides as well as the caudal vena cava on the right.

They are musculotendinous extensions of the diaphragm. In the human the right crus secures the diaphragm to the bodies of lumbar vertebrae 1, 2, and 3. The left crus secures the diaphragm to the bodies of lumbar vertebrae 1 and 2.