Blood vessels

There are three different types of blood vessels within the body.

* Arteries
* Veins
* Capillaries

Arteries carry blood away from the heart. The blood leaving the heart is under a large amount of pressure and because of this artery walls are thick.

Veins carry blood to various parts of the body and back to the heart. The blood flowing through the veins isn’t carried by the pressure of the heart pumping. Instead it relies on the contraction of the muscles to push it along. Veins have valves in them to prevent blood from flowing the wrong way and the walls are thinner than the walls of the arteries.

Capillaries are the smallest blood vessels in the body. They link the arteries and veins together. The walls of a capillary are only a single cell thick, making it easier for the exchange of oxygen to take place through them.