

Chvostek sign, frequently found in healthy subjects, is not a useful clinical sign



A healthy, 26-year-old resident (video) presented with a bilateral Chvostek sign. This finding prompted us to search for the sign in young healthy subjects in our ward, mainly residents and medical students. We found this sign in 6 of 11 subjects.

Chvostek sign is considered to be evidence of neuromuscular hyperexcitability, and is seen as a sign of hypocalcemia. However, studies found that 25% of healthy individuals (43% between the ages of 20 and 29 years) have a positive Chvostek sign,¹ and 29% of patients with hypocalcemia do not.² Our findings emphasize that it should not be considered as a clinical sign.

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