A 63-year-old man presented with 4 years of orthostatic tremor while standing, resolving after sitting or leaning against a wall. There was marked subjective unsteadiness, but no falls. Surface EMG in arms and legs demonstrated a 14- to 16-Hz synchronous tremor in antagonist muscles (video on the Neurology® Web site at www.neurology.org).

Orthostatic tremor is rare, and the characteristic high frequency can make it difficult to visualize or palpate; diagnosis often depends on tremor analysis.1 A unique feature is the sound resembling a distant helicopter during auscultation over the thigh or calf.2 This “helicopter sign” can also apply to the sound generated during surface EMG of affected muscles.

REFERENCES

Supplemental data at www.neurology.org

From the Albert Einstein College of Medicine/Montefiore Medical Center, Bronx, NY.

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Teaching Video NeuroImages: Orthostatic tremor: The helicopter sign
Vincent S. DeOrchis, Howard L. Geyer and Steven Herskovitz
Neurology 2013;80:e161
DOI 10.1212/WNL.0b013e31828ab301

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