Teaching Video NeuroImage: “Weighing” in on an Unusual Tremor

Marta Villa-López, MD, Eungseok Oh, MD, PhD, Robert Chen, MD, Anthony E. Lang, MD, FRCPC, Mario Masellis, MSc, MD, PhD, FRCPC,* and Julia J. Hopyan, MD, FRCPC*

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Correspondence
Dr. Masellis
mario.masellis@sunnybrook.ca

A 73-year-old right-handed man with hypertension, hypercholesterolemia, renal insufficiency, and cyclothymic disorder presented with 1 year of insidious onset tremor in his right hand when carrying his briefcase. Psychotropic drugs included bupropion and lamotrigine. He was neurologically intact except for a very low amplitude bilateral kinetic tremor (L > R) and a much larger amplitude right hand task-specific tremor (video 1) characterized by EMG (figure).

The phenomenology is classic for a weight-holding or "shopping bag tremor" first described in 1995.1 It is difficult to categorize based on the consensus statement for tremor classification.2 It could be considered a variant of isometric tremor, essential tremor, or task-specific tremor with different underlying etiologies. It is typically an asymmetric, progressive kinetic tremor that appears exclusively (or is more evident) when holding a weight, in contrast to classical essential tremor, which reduces in amplitude with weight-bearing.

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*These authors participated equally as co-senior authors.

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Appendix Authors

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<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Marta Villa-López, MD</td>
<td>Hurvitz Brain Sciences Program, Sunnybrook Research Institute; Division of Neurology, Department of Medicine, University of Toronto, Canada</td>
<td>Drafting/revision of the manuscript for content, including medical writing for content; major role in the acquisition of data; study concept or design</td>
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References