



The Arnold's Reflex

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Summary:

The Arnold's (cough) reflex is elicited by direct mechanical stimulation of the wall of the bony ear canal. The reflex could induce different vegetative symptoms. The most frequent is cough, but also vomiting, gagging and lacrimation. In the present study, incidence of this reflex was observed in a sample of 156 persons (86 male, 70 female) which was randomly selected from out- and in-patients of the Clinic of ENT and head and neck surgery of the Regional Hospital Pardubice. The survey revealed incidence in 20.5 % of the sample in question of the positive Arnold's reflex, in 5.8 % bilateral. The most frequent was the oto-respiratory reflex (12.8 %), followed by oto-palatal (8.3 %), oto-lacrimal (2.6 %) and oto-vomiting (1.9 %). The reflex was found in each canal quadrant, not only in posterior and inferior but also in 19 persons (12.2 %) in the superior and/or anterior wall (6.4 %, resp. 7.7 %). This is contrary to the previously described distribution of the sensitive nerves to the parts of the ear canal.

Key words: Arnold's reflex, oto-respiratory reflex, external ear canal, cough, Arnold's nerve.

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