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Clinical Image of Anteverted Concha: A Rare Auricular Variant

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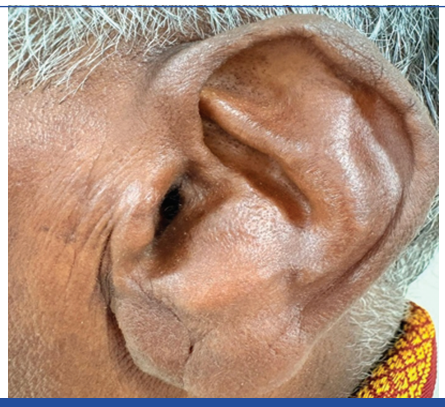
A 55-year-old male presented to the Otorhinolaryngology Department complaining of left aural fullness. Patient gives a history of frequent episodes of aural fullness followed by cerumen removal since two years. His primary concern was his frequent impaction of wax.

On physical examination, the conchal cartilage and antitragus of the left auricle were convex in the anterior direction and came into contact with the tragus as described in [Table/Fig-1]. The right auricular anatomy was within normal limits.



[Table/Fig-1]: Convex shaped conchal cartilage suggestive of anteverted concha.

On otoscopic examination, the external auditory canal of the left ear was narrower than the normal ear with impacted wax. The overlying skin was unremarkable, and there was no tenderness, erythema, or discharge. The patient was prescribed Waxonil® ear drops and was reviewed after seven days for wax removal. After the wax removal, otoscopic findings were within normal limits.

No further diagnostic tests were deemed necessary due to the characteristic feature of the deformity. No surgical intervention was recommended given the absence of major symptoms and minor cosmetic concern. The patient was advised to undergo regular otorhinolaryngological examination for ear cleaning and return for splint or mould application if the symptoms aggravate.

There is no standardised classification system for an anteverted concha. The classification system given by Chalwade CS et al., described the anteverted concha based on anatomical position and degree of external auditory meatus occlusion [1]. As per this classification, this patient came under grade 2c. Chalwade CS et al., described similar cases of 19-year-old male with grade 2c in right ear undergoing no surgical intervention.

External ear anomalies are conventionally classified as either malformation or deformation [2]. These anomalies represent inherent developmental abnormalities of the auricle, most often arising during the fifth to ninth weeks of gestation [3]. Auricular malformations can present as underdevelopment, absence, or excessive formation of structural elements of the ear, including cartilage and soft-tissue.

An anteverted concha, classified as an auricular deformation, may manifest either as a unilateral or bilateral anomaly [4-7]. Most patients remain asymptomatic, though a few may experience functional difficulties. These may present as conductive hearing loss, accumulation of cerumen, or difficulty retaining hearing aids and earphones [6]. Management options range from conservative approaches like splinting or moulding [2,7] to various surgical interventions [3,4,7].

Anteverted concha is an interesting, albeit rare, anatomical variant. While it's typically of no clinical concern, awareness of this feature is important for clinicians to reassure the patients.

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