

E-Pearl of the Week

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The other Babinski sign

Joseph Babinski first described the plantar reflex. Another phenomenon described by Babinski is seen in patients with hemifacial spasm. He observed that when these patients contract the orbicularis oculi muscle to occlude the eye, there is a simultaneous contraction of the frontalis muscle that elevates the eyebrow. This paradoxical phenomenon in patients with hemifacial spasm has been called “the other Babinski sign.” Although this sign has only 25% sensitivity for hemifacial spasm, it has 100% specificity in differentiating hemifacial spasm from blepharospasm.

Reference

Stamey W, Jankovic J. The other Babinski sign in hemifacial spasm. *Neurology* 2007; 69:402-404.