Extraesophageal reflux testing and treatment

Hoarseness, throat clearing, chronic cough, globus, and sore throat have been considered to be symptoms of extraesophageal reflux when inflammation of the larynx and trachea is noted on laryngoscopy or upper endoscopy. Many of the patients that present with these symptoms have no other symptoms of reflux such as heartburn or regurgitation. In the US, 10% of ENT clinic visits are patients with symptoms of hoarseness, throat clearing or cough that have lasted more than 6 weeks, and 79% of the time such patients are started on proton pump inhibitors as first line therapy without any diagnostic testing. However, randomized controlled trials have demonstrated that PPI’s are no better than placebo at treating the above symptoms, and studies using impedance pH testing or pharyngeal testing have concluded that reflux is present in less than half of the cases of chronic laryngeal and tracheal inflammation. Additionally, chronic high dose PPI use may increase risk of fractures in adults and young adults. This address will examine causes of chronic upper airway inflammation and suggest protocol for testing and treatment.

Biography

Mary Es Beaver is the Director of the Texas Center for Voice and Swallowing in Houston Texas, a division of Texas ENT Specialists which is the fourth largest Otolaryngology group in the United States. She has published previously on causes of chronic laryngotracheitis in numerous peer reviewed journals. She is a reviewer for the Laryngoscope and is a frequent contributor to the literature regarding pathology that affects the larynx.

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