

# Clinical Reminder

## Ortner's syndrome: a rare cause of sudden hoarseness in the older person

### Case report

MLRL, 79 years old, female, smoker, arterial hypertension, complaining of sudden hoarseness, cough and aspiration. Videolaryngoscopy diagnosed paralysis of the left vocal fold. Chest Computed Tomography identified a large aortic arch aneurysm ( $6.9 \times 5.8$  cm, Figure 1), and the diagnosis of Ortner's syndrome was confirmed.

### Discussion

Ortner's syndrome is a vocal fold paralysis resulting from compression of the recurrent laryngeal nerve in its intra-thoracic trajectory, specially the left nerve, as a consequence of cardiovascular changes [1, 2]. Aneurysms in the aortic arch are the most frequent cause [3]. Imaging should evaluate the trajectory of the nerve to confirm this diagnosis.

### Conclusion

Sudden hoarseness can be caused by vocal fold paralysis as a result of compression of the laryngeal nerve by aortic arch aneurysm, characterizing the Ortner's syndrome.

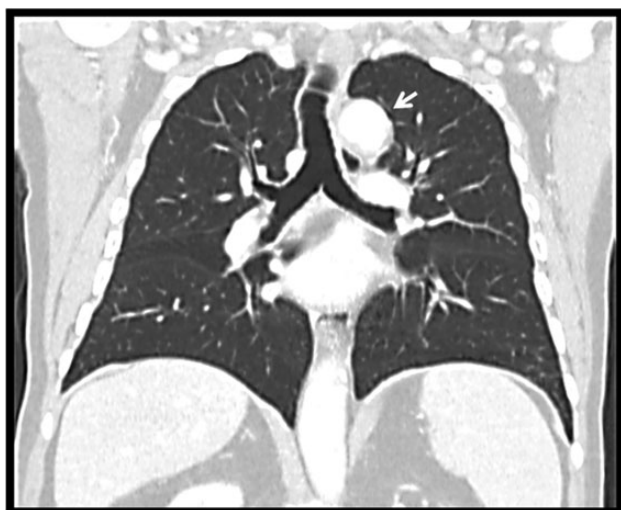


Figure 1. Saccular aneurysm of the aortic arch (arrow).

### Key points

- Aortic aneurysm and dysphonia.
- Aortic aneurysm and vocal fold paralysis.
- Causes of hoarseness and aspiration in the elderly.

### Conflicts of interest

None declared.

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