

FREY (AURICOTEMPORAL) SYNDROME: A MODEL OF ABERRANT NEURAL ACTIVITY

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A 5-year-old boy was referred to our outpatient unit because of recurrent episodes of malar flushing. The diagnosis of Frey syndrome was established. The main characteristics of this syndrome are recurrent episodes of facial gustatory flushing and/or sweating limited to the cutaneous distribution of the auriculotemporal nerve.

In our opinion, the three trigeminal syndromes – trigeminal synkinesis, trigeminal autonomic cephalgia and Frey syndrome – represent a spectrum of aberrant neural activity. The clinical symptoms are derived from aberrant parasympathetic neural activity. We hypothesize that this nerve activity is attributable either to local aberrant growth of parasympathetic nerve secondary to release of nerve growth factor into the immediate environment or aberrant nerve activity influenced by neuropeptides.

