

Unilateral loss of horizontal semicircular canal function, termed canal paresis, is an important finding in dizzy patients. To our knowledge, apart from head-shaking nystagmus, no clinical sign of canal paresis has yet been described and the term derives from the characteristic finding on caloric tests: little or no nystagmus evoked by either hot or cold irrigation of the affected ear. We describe a simple and reliable clinical sign of total unilateral loss of horizontal semicircular canal function: one large or several small oppositely directed, compensatory, refixation saccades elicited by rapid horizontal head rotation toward the lesioned side. Using magnetic search coils to measure head and eye movement, we have validated this sign in 12 patients who had undergone unilateral vestibular neurectomy ¹⁾.

¹⁾

Halmagyi GM, Curthoys IS. A clinical sign of canal paresis. Arch Neurol. 1988 Jul;45(7):737-9. PubMed PMID: 3390028.

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