

# The ear as a diagnostic key in a headache syndrome

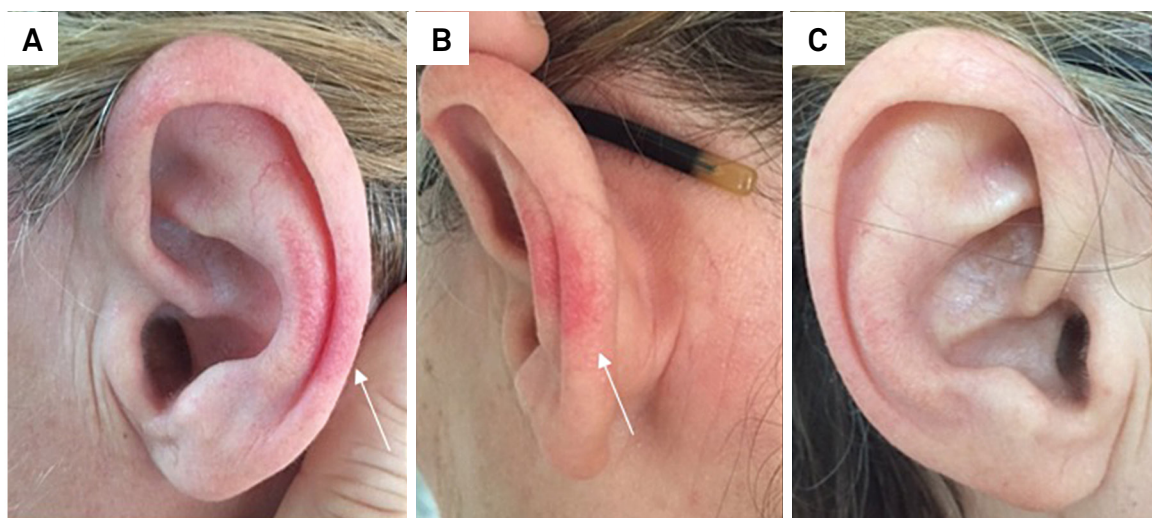
## A orelha como chave diagnóstica em uma síndrome de cefaleia

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A 64-year-old woman presented with four episodes of sudden non-progressive sharp and throbbing left ear pain in the last four months, each lasting few minutes, accompanied by redness in the left ear (Figure). Medical history showed chronic migraine by 25 years. Neurologic, ophthalmic and otorhinolaryngologic examinations, neuroimaging evaluation of

skull, cervical and thoracic columns were all unremarkable. A diagnosis of red ear syndrome (RES) was made.

RES is a rare under-recognized clinical condition manifesting as paroxysmal episodes of auricular and periauricular pain and burning sensation with ipsilateral ear rash<sup>1</sup>, triggered by different periauricular stimuli or neck movements<sup>2</sup>.



Dermatological evaluation of the patient after 4 hours of an acute episode of ear pain disclosing redness in a restricted area of the helix and antihelix of the left ear (A-B; white arrow), covering an area innervated by both the lesser occipital nerve (C2) of the cervical plexus and the auriculotemporal branch of the trigeminal nerve. No cutaneous findings were found in the right ear (C).

**Figure.** Dermatological evaluation during acute headache episode.

## References

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2. Lambru G, Miller S, Matharu MS. The red ear syndrome. *J Headache Pain*. 2013;14:83. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1186/1129-2377-14-83>

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