G

Gegenhalten

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Synonyms

[Paratonia](#)

Definition

Gegenhalten, from German to resist or hold against, is a form of hypertonia characterized by

involuntary variable resistance during passive movement (i.e., a movement without effort). It is usually elicited by moving the patient's forearm rapidly from a contracted to a stretched position, after instructing the patient not to resist. It is a primitive reflex, absent in adults, but can occur in association with frontal lobe disorders, generalized degenerative diseases, and catatonia. It should be distinguished from *cogwheel rigidity*, a sign of extrapyramidal syndromes.

References and Readings

Goetz, C. G. (2007). *Textbook of clinical neurology* (3rd ed.). Philadelphia: Saunders.