

Elements of Morphology: Standard Terminology for the Ear—Additional Features

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TO THE EDITOR:

We read with great interest the article of Hunter et al. [2009], "Elements of Morphology: Standard Terminology for the Ear" published in the American Journal of Medical Genetics in January of this year.

We would like to congratulate the authors for their excellent work. This is, without doubt, the best up-to-date approach to the terminology of the ear dysmorphology.

However, we would like to make several suggestions:

First, the reasons for excluding the "classical" terms hypotrophic/hypertrophic and hypoplasia/hyperplasia, used in dysmorphology and in medicine in general for many years, should be explained (at least in brief) in the Introduction Section.

Second, although this article was intended as a comprehensive description of all ear anomalies, some important ones were overlooked; for example, ectopic placement of the ear, anomalies of the concha (except extrafold concha), absence of the superior crus of the antihelix (cited only as part of shell ear), ear fistula, posterior helical indentation, earlobe pit, ear lobe tag, and Mozart ear [Bader et al., 2004].

Third, the omission of any data on acoustic meatus anomalies is very problematic. Some anomalies, such as absent meatus and meatal stenosis, have great significance in dysmorphology and also to patient health. As the authors are well aware, the identification

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of acoustic meatus anomalies should be an integral part of the examination of the external ear. This needs to be added to the article.

Despite its drawbacks, this article makes a great contribution to the standardization of the terminology of ear anomalies in dysmorphology and medical genetics.

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