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Pulsatile tinnitus: contemporary assessment and management.

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Source

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Abstract

PURPOSE OF REVIEW:

Pulsatile tinnitus is an uncommon otologic symptom, which often presents a diagnostic and management dilemma to the otolaryngologist. The majority of patients with pulsatile tinnitus have a treatable cause. Failure to establish correct diagnosis may have disastrous consequences, because a potentially life-threatening, underlying disorder may be present. The purpose of this review is to familiarize the otolaryngologist with the most common causes, evaluation, and management of pulsatile tinnitus.

RECENT FINDINGS:

The pathophysiology, classification, various causes, evaluation, and management of the most common causes of pulsatile tinnitus are presented in this review.

SUMMARY:

Pulsatile tinnitus deserves a thorough evaluation and, in the majority of cases, there is a treatable underlying cause. The possibility of a life-threatening cause needs to be ruled out in every patient with pulsatile tinnitus. The otolaryngologist should be familiar with the evaluation and management of this symptom.