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N Fitch
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Montreal, Quebec, Canada H3T 1E2

Autosomal dominant inheritance of Gerhardt's syndrome in three generations of a family

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Bilateral paralysis of the abductor laryngeal muscles (Gerhardt's syndrome) may be secondary to bulbar lesions of various kinds (inflammatory, ischaemic, degenerative). The syndrome is well known to laryngologists because it entails a permanent state of inspiratory dyspnoea which may require surgery.

Plott1 has described a familial case of this syndrome in three sibs born to healthy, non-consanguineous parents. They all also had mental retardation and in one there was an inner ear deafness. A fourth sib had died from asphyxia a few hours after birth. The likelihood of an X linked recessive gene was estimated by the author as 1 in 325.

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