



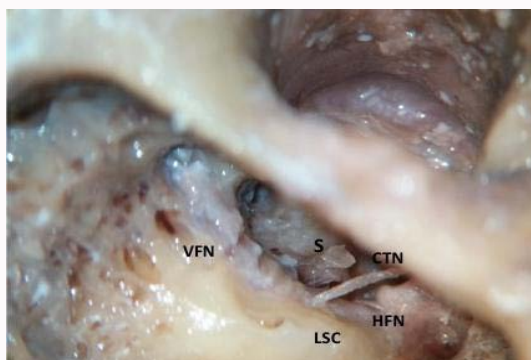
## A Rare Origin of Chorda Tympani Nerve (Need to Assess Facial Nerve Anatomy during Facial Recess Approach for Cochlear Implantation)

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### Clinical Image

We encountered one rare case of origin of chorda tympani nerve at the level of lateral semi-circular canal, during cadaveric temporal bone dissection. In 1955, Haynes had observed considerable variation in the point where chorda tympani nerve (CTN) joins the facial nerve [1]. He contradicted the popular belief that the chorda tympani joins the facial nerve at a fixed distance above the stylomastoid foramen. In one specimen, he found origin of the chorda tympani almost outside the stylomastoid foramen (SMF), whereas in others it joined the trunk almost at the level of the semicircular canal. Gray's Anatomy describes the chorda tympani nerve arising at a fixed distance of 6mm from the SMF [2]. In 1967, Durcan et al. also reported distance of CTN from SMF to be 6 mm [3]. Kullman GL et al. [4] (1971), in their 100 temporal bone dissections, noted great variability in the origin of CTN nerve, from 1.2mm distal to 10.9mm proximal to SMF ( mean of 5.3 mm).



**Figure 1:** Variation in origin of chorda tympani nerve at the level of lateral semicircular canal. CTN, chorda tympani nerve; VFN, vertical facial nerve; HFN, horizontal facial nerve; LSC, lateral semicircular canal; S, Stapes.

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