

REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-54755

Title: House Syndrome (Fixed Malleus Head): A Diagnostic Pitfall to Consider Before Stapes Surgery

Recommendation:

- ✓ Accept as it is
- Accept after minor revision.....
- Accept after major revision
- Do not accept (*Reasons below*)

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality		✓		
Techn. Quality		✓		
Clarity		✓		
Significance	✓			

Reviewer Name: Dr S. K. Nath

Date: 11.11.25

Detailed Reviewer's Report

Strengths

- Relevance and Novelty:** The paper highlights an important and relatively rare diagnosis House syndrome that can be mistaken for otosclerosis. This is a valuable contribution for surgeons and radiologists in otology, emphasizing the importance of thorough preoperative imaging and intraoperative assessment.
- Clinical Case Presentation:** The detailed case report provides a clear clinical pathway, illustrating the practical implications of misdiagnosis, and emphasizes the importance of proper diagnostic workup. The case is well documented, with intraoperative findings, imaging review, and postoperative outcomes.
- Imaging and Surgical Insights:** The paper emphasizes the utility of HRCT in diagnosing ossicular ligament ossification, which can help prevent unnecessary surgeries. The discussion on multimodal assessment is instructive.
- Ethical Consideration:** The inclusion of an ethical statement indicating that informed consent was obtained from the patient for case publication demonstrates adherence to ethical standards.

Weaknesses

- Organization and Clarity:** The manuscript would benefit from clearer section headings and logical flow, especially separating Background, Case Report, and Discussion more distinctly. Some paragraphs seem somewhat repetitive, particularly regarding the description of diagnosis and imaging importance; consolidating these points could improve readability.
- Literature Review:** While references are appropriately cited, additional recent studies or reviews on malleus fixation could enhance the context and demonstrate the novelty or rarity of this case.
- Images and Figures:** The absence of imaging figures (e.g., HRCT scans illustrating ossification) limits the visual impact of the case. Including relevant figures would significantly enhance understanding.
- Technical Details of Surgery:** The surgical technique descriptions are somewhat brief. Providing more details about the procedure, prosthesis type, and intraoperative findings would add value.
- Language and Grammar:** Minor grammatical improvements are needed for clarity and flow. For example, some sentences could be simplified or rephrased.

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Specific Recommendations

- **Add high-quality images:** Incorporate HRCT images demonstrating the ossification of the malleal ligament to support the text.
- **Enhance the literature review:** Include contemporary studies or systematic reviews on Malleus fixation or related ossicular pathologies.
- **Clarify surgical details:** Expound on the surgical approach, prosthesis used, and intraoperative challenges encountered.
- **Proofreading:** Address minor grammatical issues. For example, rephrasing sentences such as "The procedure was therefore suspended to allow further evaluation" could improve readability.