

## Discovery of a New Method of Elicitation of the Plantar Reflex (Sainani Method)

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### Abstract

*Of the various methods of eliciting a plantar response, the Sainani method gave a good response in patients with thick and rough soles. In this method, stroke is given on the lateral aspect of the foot (between the dorsum and sole of the foot).*

### Introduction

With my teaching experience of 60 years in internal medicine for undergraduates (MBBS) and post-graduates (MD, DNB, MRCP), I observed that in patients with thick and rough soles, the Babinski (1896) method of eliciting a plantar response often gives a poor response.

I then discovered a new area on the lateral aspect of the foot (between the dorsum and sole of the foot) where stroke given upwards (Fig. 1) gave a good response comparable to other methods (Oppenheim 1858, Gordon 1874, Schaefer 1852, Gonda 1889, Chaddock 1911).

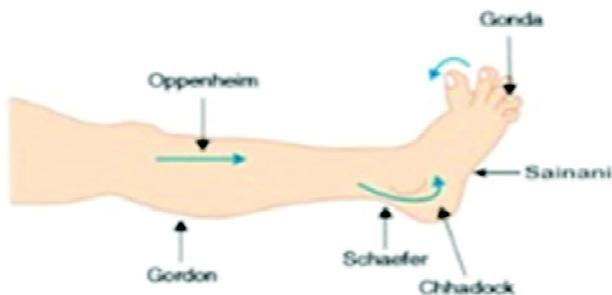


Fig. 1:

I then decided to validate my observation by carrying out the different methods of eliciting a plantar response in patients. In these 40 years (1980 to 2020) I compared personally all the reflexes mentioned above and I have found the following observations.

### Observations

1. In all patients with normal soles, response was comparable with all the methods including Sainani.
2. Patients with rough and thick soles had sluggish response to Babinski method, equivocal response with other methods, but good satisfactory response with Sainani method. So, overall Sainani method turns out to be the most reliable of all the methods.

### Conclusions

1. Sainani method is easily elicited, relatively less discomforting and overall it turns out to be the most reliable of all the methods in patients as compared to other methods. It is suggested that Sainani method should be used in patients with thick and rough soles.
2. The student appearing for exams must attempt to elicit the plantar response by Sainani method before commenting on its presence or absence. The plantar reflex is a common dilemma for both the student and the examiner.

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### Reference

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