

Frequency of Agenesis Palmaris Longus through Clinical Examination - An East African Study

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Abstract:

The Palmaris longus, one of the most variable muscles in the body both flexes the wrist and tenses the palmar fascia. It is used by surgeons as a source of tendon graft and racial differences in its variation have been documented. We sought to determine the frequency of the absence of the Palmaris longus in an East African population. A prospective study was conducted using ten common clinical tests among patients and students in a large teaching hospital in East Africa to determine the presence of a Palmaris longus. The overall rate of absence was 4.4% with unilateral absence at 3.3% and bilateral absence at 1.1%. The overall difference between males and females was not statistically significant ($p = 0.605$). Participants were more likely to have absence in their non dominant hand. Our findings though in contrast to many studies worldwide, it concurs with most studies done in the African setting. These differences may be due to the higher levels of manual labour and the more use of the right hand in these activities. The frequency of the absence of Palmaris longus in East Africa has been determined. Surgeons should acquaint themselves with prevalence in their areas of practice