

DEFINITION

1. **Deviation of the nasal septum** is a common condition in which the central wall which separates the two halves of the nasal cavity deviates in some way from the midline.

CLINICAL FEATURES

2. Deviations of the nasal septum are often asymptomatic. If symptoms are present they are usually the result of a severe deviation and they are entirely due to the effects of the deviation upon nasal function. Such effects are as follows -
 - 2.1. mechanical obstruction of the nose, which in turn can lead to impaired drainage and then to rhinosinusitis.
 - 2.2. abnormal flow of inspiratory air currents, leading to exposure of some areas of the nasal mucosa to intense levels of air flow producing a drying effect on the mucosa and leading to crusting, ulceration and oedema of the mucosa.
 - 2.3. pressure from a deviated nasal septum upon nearby sensory nerves which can produce local pain, an effect known as the "anterior ethmoidal nerve syndrome".

AETIOLOGY

3. Many cases of deviated nasal septum are the result of direct trauma to the nose, often in association with damage to other nasal structures. A patient may present with a deviated septum long after a blow to the nose which, at the time, he was unaware had damaged the nose. In many cases, no clear history of trauma is obtained.
4. The "birth moulding theory" postulates that some deviations of the septum are caused by compression effects acting on the nose during intra-uterine life and during parturition. Some septal deviations have been attributed to the effects of forceps delivery.
5. Deviation of the nasal septum can be a feature of an asymmetrical face.

CONCLUSION

6. **Deviated nasal septum** is a condition which most commonly results from trauma, either recent or long forgotten, perhaps during birth.

REFERENCES

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