

Review of: "Oscillating Esophageal Acid Sensitivity in Symptomatic Reflux Hypersensitivity and Functional Heartburn"

Vincenzo Savarino¹

¹ University of Genoa

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

The study is interesting and original. The author has reviewed the 24-h impedance-pH tracings of two groups of patients with reflux hypersensitivity (RH) and functional heartburn (FH) and found that the appearance of the symptom heartburn was correlated with the oscillations of esophageal acid exposure, in particular with the periods of lower acidity. My comments on this study are the following:

- It is surprising that the above correlation was similar in both RH and FH patients, because it is well known that FH does not pertain anymore to the world of GERD (Patel et al, Clin Gastroenterol Hepatol 2021 and Savarino et al, Curr Opin Gastroenterol 2022) and therefore reflux is not responsible for the generation of symptoms
- If it is true that there is a relation between the appearance of heartburn and periods of esophageal lower acidity, the author should find the same relationship when evaluating the episodes of weakly acidic reflux that are detected by impedance-pH monitoring and are reported in table 1 of the paper
- A causal explanation between the occurrence of heartburn and esophageal lower acidity is not proposed and is difficult to find. Indeed, many studies have shown that symptoms are related to episodes of abnormal acid reflux and to the height of them inside the esophagus
- The study is retrospective and this reduces its scientific strenght, in particular the author himself acknowledges that the onset of registration was not the same, as well as the times of meals and the durations of recumbent position