METHODS

Thirty-four fresh human temporal bones were dissected and the anatomic details were studied utilizing an operating microscope and stereomicroscopes (10×; 20×; 50×; 60× and 2×7 diameters).

RESULTS

Results indicate that the transverse axis to the tensor tympanic fold is the most useful plane to differentiate the anterior epitympanum from the posterior epitympanum and from the mesotympanum.

DISCUSSION

The anterior epitympanic space is a variable space. Its shape and size are influenced by the position of the tensor tympanic fold and the relative position of the cavities. It is not an invariant feature due to the developmental abnormalities which can produce the middle ear cavities.

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