

IT IS TIME THE STERNUM GETS A NEW NAME

Munawwar Husain ¹, Mohd Asrarul Haque ^{*2}, Mohammad Mojahid Anwar ³, Faiz Ahmad ⁴, Jawed Ahmad Usmani ⁵, Nema Usman ⁶.

¹ Professor and fmr Medical Superintendent, Department of Forensic Medicine, J N Medical College, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, India.

^{*2} JR-III, Department of Forensic Medicine, J N Medical College, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, India.

³ JR-II, Department of Forensic Medicine, J N Medical College, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, India.

⁴ JR-I, Departments of Forensic Medicine, J N Medical College, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, India.

⁵ Professor & Chairman, Department of Forensic Medicine, J N Medical College, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, India.

⁶ Assistant Professor, Department of Anatomy, J N Medical College, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, India.

ABSTRACT

Names of objects change over a period of time. New words come up to keep in line with innovations and technology. Neologism requires that the new word entrant should be concise, phonetically strong and resemble the function to which the word may be used. Internet language is the latest invention in which the word has been so abbreviated that at times the user is frightened that its continuous usage would finally obliterate the real word. To counter that threat old-timers adopt duality in action, i.e., they would use internet language while using internet portfolio and would revert to the old language while scripting text. However, in certain cases it is better to discard the old robe in favor of new when the coined word would instill more confidence and is in harmony to the function it is required to perform. In this way the word is remembered accurately and used with finesse. Presented in this paper is the strong defense for change of the word "sternum" to "saber" and reason why this change is desired.

KEY WORDS: Sternum, Saber, Manubrium, Xiphisternum.

Address for Correspondence: Dr Mohd Asrarul Haque, JR-III, Departments of Forensic Medicine, J N Medical College, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh 202 002, India. Mobile No.: +91 9045567792 / +91 8755198534 **E-Mail:** asrar428@gmail.com

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JUSTIFICATION FOR THE CHANGE OF NAME

On extended thinking followed by reasoning, it is apparent that sternum [1 (a)] is a misnomer unconnected with morphological behavior bonded with strict security responsibility. After enjoying name and unsolicited fame for millennia

it is time the sternum may get a new name- *saber* [1(b)].

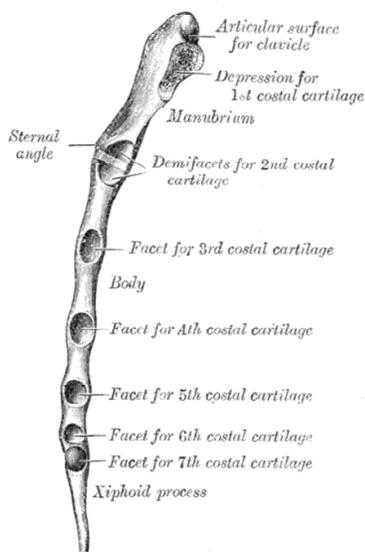
The authors as proponents render full justification to the substitution of name "sternum" to "saber". An intellectual coup needs to take place.

Comparison between Morphology, Social or Functional Responsibility and Forensic Perspective

	Sternum	Saber
Morphology	<p>It is a bony part of chest or breast. It occupies a ventral position in thorax, broader above and tapers as it traverses from manubrium to body to xiphisternum. It is 6-7" long.</p> <p>This is not a sacred or sanctified name in contrast to sacrum [2].</p>	<p>It is sharp single-edged sword broad above and tapers caudally. Hand-grip is strong; weapon can be easily manoeuvred being light weight. In close combat it is an effective and deadly weapon.</p>
Functional Responsibility	<p>To impart rigidity to the chest and at the same time assist in inflation and deflating of lungs by keeping the rib cage intact. The ribs are joined to sternum on lateral borders.</p>	<p>Saber has the responsibility to protect the individual. Being central to chest it offers fight and resistance and redeem self-honor. A warrior doesn't show his back. At times to frighten the enemy the warrior would draw the saber and rattle it. A fighter would blow the chest to challenge its adversary and display its readiness to fight.</p>
Forensic Perspective	<p>In older days of sword fight, gashes were inflicted on the chest cutting ribs. No reference could be traced where sternum got fractured in hand-to-hand combat using sharp weapon. The sternum covers the ventral part of chest and provides shelter to the heart and aorta - the vital parts of the body.</p>	<p>Therefore, analogy can be extended to draw attention to the quality and characteristic of saber. Saber being strong does not suffer truncation, neither at the tip nor below it. A strong grip (manubrium sterni) could be provided and an effective hilt can be mimicked by the junction of manubrium sterni and body of sternum. Xiphoid is yielding – being cartilaginous – and hence offer buffeting to heavy pressure without causing damage to mediastinal organs within. Worst come to worst, a heavy blow by blunt object over the precordium would cause comotio cordis and not cardiac laceration – a lethal condition leading to mortality.</p> <p>Reason: intervening and relenting sternum.</p>

(Note: The authors 1 & 5 during the last 60 years of cumulative experience (add-on experience) in forensic medicine never came across a fractured or shattered sternum in a close fight involving sharp-edged weapon.)

Sternum lateral profile



Saber



CONCLUSION

Essentially while comparing the qualities and attributes of both these names it can be pled that saber would be the right nomenclature to be used in this context. Breast bone is absolutely wrong – though it is used as an English word and is not the medical terminology. Breast is generally used for females [1c] and therefore shall not cover all genders. Saber would be a safe nomenclature for the medical students to learn and retain it in memory by association to that of the function of saber. The authors believe that the new word should be used extensively and propagated in right earnest.

Conflicts of Interests: None

REFERENCES

[1]. Webster's Third New International Dictionary, Encyclopedia Britannica Inc., 1981.

- a. Sternum (NL, fr. Gk sternon means breast, chest, breastbone; akin to OHG sterna forehead.)
 - b. Sabre (F saber, modif. of G dial. sable – a military sword with a usual curved blade having a cutting edge, a thick back, and a guard for the hand.
 - c. Breast (n-s often attrib [ME brust breast, ON brjost, Goth brusts breast] either of two protuberant milk-producing glandular organs situated on the front of the chest or thorax in the human female and some other mammals and normally functional only during the period of lactation after pregnancy.
- [2]. Kircher KF. How the sacrum got its name. JAMA, 1997; 258(3):325
- [3]. (sacrum- the os sacrum derived from Gk Heiron was not only considered "holy" and "sacred", but also "strong", "vigorous", and "high" because of its sacred duty to protect genitalia and the necessity for it to remain an intact bone as nidus for resurrection at the Day of Judgment.

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