Bilateral naevus of Ota with choroidal melanoma and diffuse retinal pigmentation in a dark skinned person

Naevus of Ota (naevus fusculoocellare ophthalmomaxillaris) was described by the Japanese dermatologist, Ota, in 1939 as a dermal melanocytic hamartoma that presents as bluish hyperpigmentation along the ophthalmic, maxillary, and mandibular branches of the trigeminal nerve. It is bilateral in less than 5% cases, occurring frequently in Orientals (0.2%–1%) and darker races and rarely in white people (0.04%). Open angle glaucomas and choroidal melanoma are the rare ocular involvements. Ota’s naevus is more common in Asians than white people but uveal melanoma occurs predominantly in white populations. 1 2 Dark skinned patients represent only 1% of all cases of orbital melanomas. 3 The risk of developing uveal melanoma in a patient with naevus of Ota is one in 400 patients in their lifetime. 1 4 We report a rare case of bilateral naevus of Ota with a right (RE) choroidal melanoma and left (LE) diffuse pigmentation of retina.

Case report

A 37 year old Anglo-Indian woman was referred with complaints of photosopia. She had black hair and light brown skin. Examination revealed a brownish-black pigmentation of the conjunctiva, episclera, and periorbital skin bilaterally. The patient’s visual acuity for distance and near was 6/6 and N5, respectively, in each eye. Heterochromia was present, the right iris being a darker shade than the left. There was no subretinal fluid observed. The left eye showed a patchy dark pigmentation 3 DD in size, at the temporal edge of the macula. A ridge-like pigmented elevation, 3 DD long, was also seen along the supranasal vessels. Both optic discs and maculas were normal. Ultrasound in the right eye showed a 10 mm tumour, 4.2 mm high. Fluorescein angiography confirmed its indeterminate circulation. A systemic examination found no signs of metastasis. A diagnosis of a bilateral naevus of Ota with low grade, choroidal melanoma in the right eye (fig 2) and retinal pigmentation in the left eye was made. The patient was reluctant to accept the option of enucleation in view of the right vision. A 125I radioactive plaque was applied (COMS study). A follow up examination 3 years postoperatively showed a flattened, yellow 4 DDx1.5 DD scarred tumour with mottled pigmentation. The left melanoma remained unchanged. The vision was 6/6 in both eyes 6 years after 125I treatment and cataract surgery.

Comment

Ota’s naevus is commonly seen unilaterally (90%). Bilateral involvement is rare. It represents melanocytes that have not migrated completely from the neural crest to the epidermis during the embryonic stage. Orientals and pigmented races have a high prevalence with a predilection for women (1:1.5). Variable prevalence among different populations suggests genetic influences, although familial cases are rare. Two peak ages of onset in early infancy (50%) and in early adolescence suggest hormonal influence. 7 In addition to the skin, pigmentation may involve oral mucosa, tympanic membrane, intranasal mucosa, leptomeninges and ocular structures such as the sclera, retrolubular fat, cornea, lens, trabeculum, disc, and retina. Associated malignant melanomas of the uvea, orbit, skin, and CNS have been described. 8 Choroidal melanomas are known to occur in less than 4% of cases and glaucoma has been noticed in less than 10% of cases. 9

Our case reports a rare occurrence of bilateral naevus of Ota with choroidal malignant melanoma in the right eye and retinal pigmentation in the left eye in a pigmented person. She was born to Anglo-Indian parents but did not know how far back in time the intermarriage had occurred. Ophthalmological follow up care is necessary for patients with increased melanosis. This case illustrates the need for regular ophthalmic review of all pigmented lesions and the recognition that patients with naevus of Ota may also have the additional complication of melanoma. There is need for close observation of all pigmented lesions of the eye. Regardless of the patient’s race, there is a greater than normal chance that a patient with the naevus of Ota might have a malignant melanoma develop within one of the affected tissues.

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References


Treatment of neurotrophic keratopathy with nasal dilator strips

Neurotrophic keratopathy, characterised by poorly healing corneal epithelium, occurs in eyes with decreased corneal sensory innervation. Clinical findings include chronic epithelial defects and corneal ulceration. Numerous conditions predispose to neurotrophic keratopathy including diabetes mellitus, accidental and surgical trauma, herpes simplex and herpes zoster keratitis, leprosy, and topical anaesthetic abuse.

Management of neurotrophic keratopathy includes ocular lubrication, pressure patching, autologous serum eye drops, 1 fitting of a bandage contact lens, 2 anionic membrane grafting, 3 4 and surgical tarsorrhaphy. Surgical tarsorrhaphy can be very successful in resolving neurotrophic corneal ulceration, 5 but many patients find this option cosmetically unacceptable.

We describe a novel method of non-surgical tarsorrhaphy using over the counter, non-medicated, nasal dilator strips (NDS) (Breathe Right Nasal Strips, Whippety, NJ, USA) applied vertically across the eyelids (fig 1). The adhesive strip consists of parallel bands of plastic imbedded in a pad, and is available in different sizes. The nasal strips were originally developed to treat patients with snoring problems, 6 or to improve nasal congestion. 7 In rhinological applications, the strip is typically used to occlude nasal passageways temporarily.
Case reports

A 60 year old woman developed a neurotrophic corneal ulcer following a complicated retinal detachment repair. After a year of stabilising medical therapies, including lubrication and frequent conventional patching, she continued to have a 4 mm x 4 mm chronic non-healing epithelial defect. Treatment with reversible NDS tarsorrhaphy was initiated with instructions to apply the strips at bedtime and as much as possible during the day. Nine weeks later the corneal epithelial defect had healed completely. Over the next year she gradually decreased the wearing time of the strips and is currently stable without their use.

A 48 year old woman with a 6 mm x 2 mm neurotrophic corneal ulcer was referred for management after failing numerous medical and surgical therapies including lubrication, autologous serum eye drops, patching, and an amniotic membrane graft. The patient was instructed to use NDS tarsorrhaphy according to the schedule described in the previous case. Within 2 weeks the corneal epithelial defect healed completely. The patient continues to apply the tarsorrhaphy but with decreasing frequency.

The novel use of nasal dilator strips to perform a temporary tarsorrhaphy has aided us greatly in our management of neurotrophic corneal ulceration. We believe it is an attractive, cost effective, efficient alternative to patching for any ocular condition. In addition, nasal strip tarsorrhaphy allows for immediate reversibility that facilitates patient acceptance.

References


Confocal microscopy of the cornea in nephropathic cystinosis

Cystinosis is an autosomal recessive inherited disorder of amino acid metabolism characterised by the deposition of cystine crystals in the eye, kidney, reticuloendothelial system, and various other tissues. Childhood or nephropathic cystinosis can present as an infantile or a juvenile variant. The infantile variant tends to have a more devastating course and is associated with growth retardation, rickets, and eventual renal failure which requires transplantation within the first decade. The juvenile variant has later onset and milder nephropathy.

In nephropathic cystinosis, crystal deposits usually appear in the peripheral, anterior cornea within the first year of life and progress centrally and posteriorly until the entire cornea is involved. The diagnosis can be confirmed histopathologically by demonstration of characteristic crystals by electron microscopy in a conjunctival biopsy. Stromal deposition of crystal deposits has been demonstrated by confocal microscopy. We provide the first demonstration, to the best of our knowledge, of cystine crystals in the corneal epithelium using in vivo confocal microscopy.

Case report

A 9 year old boy presented to the King Khaled Eye Specialised Hospital in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, with a complaint of recurrent foreign body sensation, associated with severe photophobia and blepharospasm. He had been diagnosed with infantile neurotrophic cystinosis at age of 9 months and had been treated with systemic cysteamine. On examination, the visual acuity was 20/20 in the right eye and 20/25 in the left eye. The intraocular pressure was 12 mm Hg in both eyes. Slit lamp examination showed crystal deposits of 2.5 in Gahl density score in both corneas, predominantly involving the anterior stroma and with limbus to limbus distribution.

We provide the first demonstration, to the best of our knowledge, of cystine crystals in the corneal epithelium using in vivo confocal microscopy. The current case clearly documents that crystalline deposits may be found in the epithelium of patients with nephropathic cystinosis, unlike previous electron microscopic and confocal microscopic studies that suggest these deposits are localised to the stroma. In addition, we found maximum crystal density in the mid-stroma and minimum density in the posterior stroma, in contrast with a previous report in which maximum crystal density was just anterior to Descemet’s membrane.

We hypothesise the presence of these abnormal deposits in the corneal epithelium may contribute, in part, to the foreign body sensation and photophobia that is invariably associated with this disorder, as well as the predisposition to recurrent epithelial erosions. Chronic low grade inflammation of the epithelium and epithelial basement membrane zone associated with recurrent epithelial erosions is the probable explanation for the presence of dendritic cells in the epithelium of the central cornea. Successful reduction in the density of corneal crystals and symptomatic relief was obtained with the use of topical cysteamine 0.5% drops, as in previous reports.

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Competing interests: none declared

Crystal deposits in the corneal epithelium and stroma. A mixture of needle shaped and fusiform shaped crystals are present in (A) the superficial epithelial cell layer and (B) the wing cell layer. (C) Dendritic cells are present in the basal cell layer. (D) The greatest density of crystals is in the mid-stroma, where fusiform shaped crystals are the predominant morphology. (E) The least density of crystals is in the posterior stroma, where needle shaped crystals are the predominant morphology.

Figure 2

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References


Case report

A 57 year old man received parenteral fluid five times a week at home because of short bowel syndrome secondary to Crohn’s disease. It was thought he had undergone bowel adaptation to meet macronutrient and micronutrient needs in the 13 years since his surgery. He presented with subacute visual disturbance. He described altered colour perception in situations analogous to macular stress testing (moving from dark adapted situations to bright lights) and enlarging central scotoma. Visual acuity was 6/6 in the right eye, 6/12 in the left. Visual fields, intraocular pressures, and neurological examination were normal. Funduscopy revealed macular soft drusen, and extensive subretinal basal laminar deposits in the macular region, more marked in the right eye (fig 1). Electroretinogram was normal.

The patient was receiving electrolyte support 6 days a week at time of presentation. Measured haematological parameters and urea and electrolyte levels revealed a low haemoglobin level (11.0 g/dl), and a mild degree of macrocytosis (102.3 fl). Because hypertransaminase and/or deficiency in trace minerals were suspected, serum values of vitamins A, E, B1, B2, B6, plasma zinc, copper, selenium, manganese, caeruloplasmin, and red cell GSH activity were measured. Results revealed vitamin E deficiency (12 pmol/l) with normal range of 40–120 pmol/l. A retrospective survey of previous serum vitamin E levels suggested long-standing deficiency, with levels of 10 pmol/l, and 13 pmol/l, 6 months and 1 year respectively, before onset of symptoms. Treatment with vitamin supplementation lead to complete resolution of symptoms in 3 weeks. Vitamin E levels returned to normal; however, fundal appearances remained unchanged.

Comment

The presence of bilateral hard and soft drusen and pigmentary abnormalities in the macula are the clinical hallmarks of AMD.1 The early onset of morphological changes at Bruch’s membrane/retinal pigment epithelium (RPE) interface may relate to vitamin or micronutrient deficiency, associated with parenteral nutrition.2

Cumulative oxidative damage may have an important role in the pathogenesis of AMD, since accumulation of lipofuscin pigments may arise as a consequence of antioxidant deficiency, or under pro-oxidant conditions.3 Evidence exists for an association between atrophic AMD and excessive lipofuscin accumulation.4 Compromised RPE in this context is believed to be due to the amphiphilic structure and photoreactivity of the di-retinal conjugate A2E, the major constituent of lipofuscin.5 Antioxidant vitamins have been shown to aid in the defence against AMD.6 Vitamins E and C suppress A2E epoxidation, suggesting one mechanism by which these vitamins may protect the ageing macula.7

Vitamin E deficiency was present consistently over the 12 month period preceding symptom onset, reinforcing the likelihood that the clinical presentation had been caused by vitamin E deficiency. Vitamin E deficiency results in retinal degeneration, excessive RPE lipofuscin, and decrease in the polyunsaturated fatty acid content of rod outer segments and the RPE.8 Furthermore, vitamin E deficiency may cause mild macrocytic anaemia and accumulation of ceroid lipofuscin in nerves, affecting function of central and peripheral nervous systems.9 Patients with sufficient gut length for protein calorie nutrition receiving parenteral fluids may run the risk of micronutrient deficiency despite a normal diet, and may present to the ophthalmology department. We recommend formal micronutrient screening in patients with extensive small bowel resection.

Total parenteral nutrition, vitamin E, and reversible macular dysfunction morphologically mimicking age related macular degeneration

A variety of nutrient deficiencies may predispose to the development of age related macular degeneration (AMD).1 Patients receiving parenteral nutrition (TPN) may be at particular risk of early onset AMD, because of inadequate or excess nutritional supplementation.10 Studies including the Eye Disease Case-Control Study and Beaver Dam Eye Study have evaluated the relation between antioxidant and micronutrient levels, and the risk of AMD.11,12 A protective effect of high plasma vitamin E levels was convincingly demonstrated.

We describe a patient treated with parenteral fluid support who developed visual symptoms and signs of AMD, in conjunction with longstanding vitamin E deficiency. Isolated cases of visual disturbance in patients undergoing TPN have been reported in the literature;5 however, to our knowledge, no case of visual disturbance attributed to vitamin E deficiency has been reported in this context.
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References

Spontaneous involution of autologous lenses and phacoanaphylaxis reaction in Stickler syndrome

Stickler syndrome is a “hereditary progressive arthro-ophthalmopathy” caused in the majority of cases by mutations of the COL2A1 gene encoding for type II collagen. The disease is transmitted as an autosomal dominant trait with high penetrance but variable expressivity. Most common ocular manifestations of the disease are myopia, vitreous veils and degeneration, early cataract, retinal peripheral breaks and retinal detachment.

Case report

This patient had typical ocular and extracul ar clinical manifestations of Stickler syndrome. She was fitted with contact lenses (~17.00 dioptres) at the age of 1 month. Despite the relatively poor vision, hearing impairment and skeletal problems, she developed well mentally and attended regular school. With glasses (~15.00) the visual acuity (VA) was stable, around 6/21 (20/75) for distance and J2 for near in both eyes. A mild central opacity of the posterior lens capsule was initially observed in both eyes when she was 7 years old (fig 1A). The IOP was 12 mm Hg, the corneas clear, anterior chambers deep and devoid of any inflammatory signs. Fundus examination disclosed no changes from previous examinations (fig 1B). Refraction and VA in both eyes remained unchanged.

Figure 1 (A) Mild opacity of the lens posterior capsule of the right eye initially observed at the age of 7 years. (B) Appearance of the fundus demonstrating the retinal pigmentary changes in the periphery and retinal degenerative changes within the posterior pole. (C) Marked opacification and fusion of the lens capsules in the right eye observed at 9 years of age. (D) Mild capsule opacities are still observed 2 years later, at 11 years of age. The refractive error at this stage is +1.25 and the visual acuity for distance is 6/12 (20/40).

Figure 2 (A) Large cortical remnants are seen within the capsular bag remnant in the left eye with an intense flare and many inflammatory cells. The cornea is still mildly hazy 2 weeks after the phacoanaphylactic reaction. (B) The vitreous of the left eye is hazy with many cortical lens remnants observed with transillumination at the slit lamp. (C) Right eye is quiet, the refractive error is +1.25, and the uncorrected visual acuity 6/12 (20/40) despite the presence of mild lens capsule opacities. (D) Left eye is also quiet showing the same characteristics as the right eye.
On 23 June 2002, at the age of 9 years, she complained of blurred vision in the right eye. Without glasses, VA for distance was 6/60 (20/200) and for near less than J16. Involution of the lens material with marked opacity of the fused capsules was detected (fig 1C). Accurate retinoscopy was not possible. No intraocular inflammatory signs were observed.

On 23 May 2004, the right eye lens opacities reabsorbed. Mild posterior capsule opacity remains (fig 1D). VA without correction was 6/12 (20/40) and J10. Refraction disclosed +1.25 D. The left eye VA and myopia remained unchanged.

Six weeks later sudden pain, redness, and loss of vision in the left eye occurred. A high IOP of 60 mm Hg, hazy cornea, mutton fat keratic precipitates with flare 3+ and cells 4+ were observed in the left eye anterior chamber. She was treated with corticosteroids and antiglaucoma drops. Two weeks later, a central tear of the posterior capsule with remnants with the capsular bag (fig 2A) and a multitude of floating lens remnants with a granulomatous inflammatory reaction were observed in the vitreous (fig 2B). Following complete arrest of the inflammatory processes and a return to normal of the IOP, medical treatment was discontinued 5 weeks after its initiation.

At her last visit on 21 November 2004, both eyes were quiet. Only mild scattered lens capsule opacities were detected in both eyes (figs 2C and 2D). The VA without correction was 6/12 (20/40) and J10 in both eyes. With correction (+1.25) for distance and near addition (+3.00), the VA in both eyes was 6/9 (20/30) and J1 respectively. Multifocal glasses were prescribed.

Comment
A quiet and uneventful involution of the autologous lens occurred in the right eye when the child was 9 years old. The mechanism of this phenomenon is unclear and may be associated with abnormalities of the lens collagen and/or crystals. The lens involution in the right eye was not associated with any noticeable symptom but for a drop in vision. Progressive clearing of the lens opacity was followed by emmetropisation of the initial refractive error and visual improvement in the left eye. Two years later, spontaneous involution of the lens in the other eye was associated with a marked intraocular granulomatous inflammatory reaction ("granulomatous uveitis") reminiscent of a phacoanaphylaxis reaction. This acute reaction was, most probably, associated with the "escape" of immune tolerance towards the autologous lens antigens.

We are not aware of previous reports in the literature describing similar ocular phenomena.

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References

Temporal pterygium: benign or not?
A true pterygium is a degenerative and hyperplastic process in which the cornea is invaded by a triangular fold of bulbar conjunctiva. Duke-Elder states that the pterygium when single is almost invariably found on the nasal side. The literature on pterygium is abundant and almost from the beginning the emphasis has been placed on its location on the nasal side.

Squamous cell neoplasia of the conjunctiva is relatively uncommon and can masquerade as common, but less significant, ocular surface conditions including pterygium or chronic blepharocconjunctivitis. We present a case of intraepithelial neoplasia, initially diagnosed as inflamed pterygium.

Case report
A 77 year old man, who had worked on the railways, presented with a 3 week history of redness on the outer aspect of the left eye. No history of associated pain, discharge, or watering was elicited. His medical history included hypertension and hypercholesterolaemia under treatment. The best corrected visual acuity in each eye was 6/5. On inspection of the anterior segment, the left temporal conjunctiva showed a fleshy tissue encroaching on the temporal peripheral cornea (fig 1). The peripheral cornea showed an elevated ridge with punctate staining. The overlying conjunctiva was injected. The rest of the ocular examination was within normal limits.

A provisional diagnosis of inflamed pterygium of left eye was made and the patient was commenced on prednisolone 0.5% eye drops at this stage with advice to review in 2 weeks’ time. On follow up no significant change was noticed in the lesion. On further inquiry the patient gave a history of injury to left eye with hot ashes many years earlier. In view of the atypical location and the appearance of the lesion, we did an excision biopsy of the conjunctival and corneal lesion. Histopathology revealed an irregular epithelial thickening associated with dyskeratosis and full thickness dysplasia. Numerous mitotic figures, some atypical, were present throughout the epithelium (fig 2). A diagnosis of conjunctival intraepithelial neoplasia was made. Although no unequivocal evidence of invasion was seen in the multiple sections examined, fragmentation of the tissue during processing precluded confirmation of complete excision.

The patient was referred for further treatment to an oculoncologist and underwent ruthenium plaque therapy followed by topical 5-fluorouracil treatment.

Comment
Temporal pterygium is reported, although Dolezalova found only one case of unilateral temporal pterygium out of 1388 Arab patients with pterygia. 1 We would therefore consider this case to be atypical.

The role of pterygium in the development of ocular surface squamous neoplasia is unclear. 2 Both conditions have a strong association with exposure to ultraviolet-B radiation. Sevel and Sealy’s study of 12 squamous cell carcinoma and 17 carcinoma in situ arising in 100 pterygia found that it can be difficult to distinguish a “reactive pterygium” from carcinoma in situ and malignant change should be considered in a pterygium if there is unusual evidence of invasion, extension, or if the lesion becomes particularly vascular. 3

To our knowledge, the last reported case of temporal pterygium was in the 1970s. 4 We present this case to refresh the memory and to highlight the importance of keeping an index of suspicion for squamous cell neoplasia in any atypical presentation of the more
common conjunctival lesions such as pterygium.

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Simultaneous intraosseous and intradural capillary haemangioma of orbit

Primary intraosseous haemangioma is an uncommon tumour of bone which tends to involve the vertebrae and skull.1-4 Bony orbital lesions are rare with very few case reports in the literature.1-2 Simultaneous intradural involvement has never been reported in association with an orbital component. We report an unusual case of capillary haemangioma of the orbital roof with periorbital and dural involvement.

Case report

A 39 year old white male was seen with a 1 year history of painless right upper eyelid swelling and reduced superior visual field. He had marked downward (3 mm), outward (2 mm), and axial (4 mm) displacement of the right globe (fig 1A), with limitation of elevation and 5 dioptres of hypotropia in upgaze. The remaining ocular and systemic evaluation were normal.

Contrast enhanced CT and gadolinium enhanced magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) (fig 1B) demonstrated a well circumferentially enhancing dura adjacent to the dominant intracranial component. (C) Contrast enhanced coronal T1 fat saturated image through the orbits demonstrates an intraosseous mass in the right orbital roof, with intraorbital and intracranial extension. Its heterogeneous appearance is the result, in part, of scattered calcifications throughout the mass. Mass effect upon the superior extraocular muscle group is evident.

The patient underwent right sided frontal craniotomy and orbital osteotomy with piecemeal gross total resection of the right orbital roof, the involved adjacent periorbita, dura and bone.

Grossly, pathological samples including dura (fig 2A) were soft and reddish-light tan coloured in appearance. Microscopic examination (fig 2B) revealed a cellular capillary haemangioma of bone, with periorbital and dural involvement (fig 2D), consisting of thin walled blood vessels with some osteoblastic activity and new bone formation. Tumour immunohistochemistry stains for CD34 (fig 2C), CD31, vimentin, and O13 were positive, confirming a vascular origin.

Comment

Intraosseous haemangiomas are benign tumours arising from the intrinsic blood vessels of bone and are two to three times more common in females than males.1-3 They are slow growing, accounting for only 0.7-1% of bone tumours, with the most common site being the vertebrae and skull (frontal and parietal).1-4 They are typically seen in the adult population, with a peak in the fourth decade, although any age can be affected.1-4 Haemangiomas are histopathologically classified as either cavernous (common in the skull and orbit) or capillary (found mainly in vertebrae).1 The pathogenesis of these tumours is unknown.1

The clinical presentation of orbital intraosseous haemangioma is usually a progressive asymptomatic mass which may lead to proptosis, diplopia, optic neuropathy, and ptosis. To date, the largest series contained 21 cases, of which four were of the capillary type.1 Though intracranial extension has been noted in the past, intradural lesion is reported only once with calvarial capillary haemangiomata (sphenoid)1 but never with orbital invasion.

Plain films typically show bony erosion with scalloped bone giving a “sunburst” appearance.1-3 Cavernous and capillary haemangiomas usually have similar imaging findings with differentiation made on histopathological analysis.1

The differential diagnosis for a localised lytic bone lesion with calcifications is wide, including primary bone tumours such as osteosarcoma, chondrosarcoma, meningoïda, haemangioma, brown tumour, or infection. Reactive lesions, such as xanthoma of bone, aneurysmal bone cyst, and reparative granuloma are also in the differential. Careful radiological evaluation in combination with clinical history and findings usually allows for differentiation among these different lesions.

With respect to our case, the characteristic high signal intensity on T1 imaging usually seen in vertebral haemangiomas was absent, probably the result of a relatively low fat content.1-2
In our case, atypical dural enhancement on imaging was noted with associated erosion of overlying frontal bone. Preferred treatment for symptomatic haemangiomas is surgical resection of the entire lesion, with preoperative embolisation. Radiation has been advocated for large and/or unresectable lesions.

References

Two novel mutations of connexin genes in Chinese families with autosomal dominant congenital nuclear cataract

Congenital or childhood cataract is a clinically and genetically highly heterogeneous lens disorder, with autosomal dominant inheritance being most common. Non-syndromic congenital cataracts have an estimated frequency of 1–6 per 10 000 live births, with one third of cases familial. Underlying mutations have identified 14 genes involved in the pathogenesis of isolated inherited cataract, including seven genes coding for crystallins (CRYAA, CRYAB, CRYBA1/A3, CRYBB1, CRYBB2, CRYGC, CRYGD), two for gap junctional channel protein (GJA3 and GJA8), two for lens membrane protein (LIM2 and MIP), one for beaded filament structural protein 2 (BFSP2), and one for glucosaminyl (N-acetyl) transferase 2 (GCNT2), one for heat shock transcription factor (HSF4). Here we report two novel heterozygous mutations in the GJA8 and GJA3 genes, in two Chinese families affected by autosomal dominant congenital nuclear cataracts.

Table 2 Two point LOD scores for linkage between the cataract locus and 13q markers in family B

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Two novel mutations of connexin genes in Chinese families with autosomal dominant congenital nuclear cataract

Pedigree and haplotype construction were undertaken using Cyrillic v.2.1 software (figs 1A and 2A).

Table 1 Two point LOD scores for linkage between the cataract locus and 1q markers in family A

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Case report
We studied two Chinese three generation nuclear cataract families with a dominant pattern of inheritance. Clinical information and blood specimens were obtained from 16 members of family A (seven affected and nine unaffected), and 13 members of family B (nine affected and four unaffected). All participants had a full oculoc assessment to document the phenotype. The phenotype of two families was characterised by bilateral nuclear cataract that was present at birth or developed during infancy. There was no evidence of other systemic or ocular defects.

After obtaining informed consent, we used a panel of 46 microsatellite markers to study 13 loci for known candidate genes of autosomal dominant congenital cataract susceptibility. The markers’ order and position were obtained from the Marshfield Genetic Database (www.marshfield.org/genetics/maps). Genotyping and data collection were conducted by ABI Prism GeneMapper v 3.0 software. We carried out two point linkage analysis using the MLINK program from the Linkage v.5.10 software package. It suggested positive linkage on chromosome 1q21.1 (lod score was 2.44 for marker D11S1167) in family A and chromosome 13q11–12 (lod score was 1.63 for marker D13S1326) in family B (tables 1 and 2).

There are two strong candidate genes in these regions, GJA8 encoding connexin 43, connexin 46, and connexin 50. Gap junction intercellular communication is an essential part of the cell-cell communication system, which facilitates the exchange of ions, metabolites, signalling molecules, and other molecules with a molecular weight up to 1 kDa.4 Each gap junction channel is composed of two hemi-channels, or connexons, which dock in the extracellular space between adjacent cells, and each connexon comprised six integral transmembrane protein subunits known as connexins. All connexins have four transmembrane domains and two extracellular loops with cytoplasmic N and C termini.

Comment

Three connexins are expressed in the lens: connexin 43, connexin 46, and connexin 50. Gap junction intercellular communication is an essential part of the cell-cell communication system, which facilitates the exchange of ions, metabolites, and molecules with a molecular weight up to 1 kDa. Each gap junction channel is composed of two hemi-channels, or connexons, which dock in the extracellular space between adjacent cells, and each connexon comprised six integral transmembrane protein subunits known as connexins. All connexins have four transmembrane domains and two extracellular loops with cytoplasmic N and C termini.

Figure 1

(A) Pedigree and haplotype analysis of family A showing segregating nine microsatellite markers on chromosome 1, listed in descending order from the centromere. Squares and circles symbolise males and females. The phenotype of three affected and four unaffected individuals, respectively. IV:2 is the proband. (B) Sequence chromatograms showing the 1901 T → G transition in exon 2 of GJA8, resulting in a Val → Gly substitution at codon 64 (fig 1B). Sequence analysis of GJA3 detected a heterozygous 134 G → C (AF075290) transition, resulting in a Trp (TGG) → Ser (TGC) substitution at codon 45 (fig 2B). We examined all unaffected members of two families and 200 unrelated normal controls for GJA3 and GJA8 gene mutations but failed to detect these sequence variations.

References

Pneumosinus dilatans is an abnormal dilatation of one or more of the paranasal sinuses. It has diverse manifestations including progressive visual loss if the sphenoid sinus is involved and/or if it is associated with optic nerve meningioma. If the ethmoidal sinus is involved it may present with proptosis. Although a valve mechanism raising the pressure inside the sinus is thought to be responsible for this condition, the exact etiology is unknown. In case of optic nerve damage the nerve is usually compressed in long bony tubes. Pneumosinus dilatans has been associated with meningioma of the intracranial optic nerve and anterior chiasmal angle, middle cranial fossa arachnoid cyst, cerebral hemiatrophy, and prolonged cerebrospinal fluid shunting.

To our knowledge this is the first case of PSD associated with sickle cell trait. PSD has not been associated previously with haematological disorders. Considering the fact that sickle cell trait is generally an asymptomatic condition and the patient’s mother was also sickle cell trait, an asymptomatic carrier, an aetiological relation is unproved. On the other hand, both conditions are rare in our population, therefore the probability of coincidence by chance would seem to be extremely low. The question remains whether our patient had an unusual form of sickle cell trait associated with gross bony involvement and deformity. Different treatments have been proposed for PSD. These include subtotal resection of the medial wall of the maxillary sinus by an endoscopic approach, osteotomy of the deformed fronto-orbital bossing, and obliteration of the sinus with fat. Because of regional and massive expansion of the sinuses and severe optic nerve dysfunction in this case, we preferred to decompress the optic nerve by removing the roof of bony canal which surrounded the intracranial optic nerve. This resulted in mild visual improvement.

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References


Pellucid marginal degeneration coexistent with cornea plana in one member of a family exhibiting a novel KERA mutation

Characterised by flattening of the normally convex corneal surface, small corneas, high hyperopia, and arcus senilis, autosomal recessive cornea plana is secondary to KERA mutation.\(^1\)\(^2\) KERA encodes keratocan, an evolutionarily conserved small leucine rich proteoglycan. Keratocan, highly and uniquely expressed in the cornea, is composed of core proteins consisting mostly of leucine rich repeats (LRRs).\(^1\)\(^2\) All patients documented to be homozygous for one of the four previously reported KERA mutations have disruption of LRR architecture and demonstrate similar cornea plana phenotypes.\(^1\)\(^2\) In contrast, corneal pellucid marginal degeneration (PMD) is an idiopathic progressive ectatic corneal disorder that is clinically diagnosed by characteristic thinning, resultant “against the rule” astigmatism, and absence of opacity.\(^4\) We report a case of superior PMD coexistent with cornea plana in a family exhibiting a novel KERA mutation and document the ophthalmic findings of the family.

Case series

Twelve individuals from a Saudi nuclear family were studied after institutional review board approval and family informed consent had been obtained from the family. Clinical findings and diagnoses are summarised in figures 1 and 2, and table 1. Only one family member (patient 4) had a history of progressive visual difficulty over the last several years, and this was due to an increasing astigmatic refractive error. Axial lengths and keratometry readings were recorded using the Zeiss IOL-Master (2001 model), and corneal topography was performed using the Bausch & Lomb Orbiscan 2Z (2002 model).

All family members underwent KERA DNA sequencing using methods previously described.\(^3\) A novel mutation was detected...
in exon 2, [1454 C>T, ENST000000266719], changing an arginine amino acid at position 279 to a stop codon [R279X]. The resultant truncated protein lacks the terminal 73 amino acids of normal keratocan. This mutation was homozygous in the five siblings with clinically evident cornea plana (Nos 3, 5, 7, 11, 12) and the sister with clinical findings of PMD and cornea plana (No 4). All other family members (Nos 1, 2, 6, 8, 9, 10) were heterozygous for the mutation and clinically unaffected.

**Comment**
All four previously reported KERA mutations disrupt keratocan LRR architecture and are associated with similar corneal phenotypes in documented homozygotes.\(^3\) The current mutation [R279X] similarly disrupts LRR function, as the prematurely truncated protein lacks two LRRs of normal keratocan and is associated with the expected cornea plana phenotype. Interestingly, one homozygous individual (No 4) demonstrates corneal findings compatible with both superior PMD (corneal thinning with astigmatism) and autosomal recessive cornea plana (small corneas, arcus senilis)—the presence of arcus senilis excludes classic PMD alone by definition.\(^1\)\(^2\) It is unlikely that the KERA mutation itself is responsible for the PMD findings in this individual. The sectorial thinning and progressive high astigmatism characteristic of superior PMD have not been reported in individuals documented to be homozygous for KERA mutation or in other pedigrees consistent with autosomal recessive cornea plana.\(^1\)\(^2\) The PMD findings of patient 4 are most likely the result of coincidence—that is, the occurrence of both cornea plana and PMD in the same individual. However, a defect in a poorly understood mechanism other than KERA itself that is responsible for normal keratocan function cannot be completely excluded as an explanation for these findings.\(^3\)

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**References**
Alteration of cyclic frequency by botulinum toxin injection in adult onset cyclic esotropia

Cyclic strabismus is an uncommon disorder in which strabismus comes and goes alternately, consistently, and repetitively over a period of time. In a 48 hour cycle, a 24 hour period of orthotropia would be followed by a 24 hour period of constant strabismus. Cycles of 24 hour to 96 hour patterns have been reported. Most cases have been described in children, and the aetiology of cyclic strabismus is still speculative.

Case report
A 57 year old woman was referred to Kaohsiung Medical University Hospital with the complaint of a periodic visual fluctuation of a “good day” and a “bad day” alternately for about 6 months. She had diplopia on bad days. She did not have diabetes or hypertension. There was no history of strabismus, amblyopia, patching therapy, ocular trauma, or oculomotor palsy. She had received trials of Mestinon treatment by two neurologists. Except for pterygium excision 4 years earlier, other ocular and medical history were unremarkable. There was no family history of strabismus.

Her visual acuity was 20/25 with +1.25 lens RE and 20/20 LE plano. Cycloplegic refraction was +1.25 RE and -0.50 LE. The anterior segments were normal except for recurrent pterygia on the nasal limbus in both eyes.

Ophthalmoscopic examination, ocular alignment (fig 1A), and ocular motility were normal. Since the initial examination was on her “good day,” she was asked to come back the next day—that is, on the “bad day.”

The next day, there was a 25 prism dioptre, commissural right esotropia (fig 1B) with full ocular motility. The visual acuity was unchanged. Brain and orbit magnetic resonance imaging studies were unremarkable except for a suspected small arachnoid cyst on the right side of the falx.

She received 2.5 U botulinum toxin (Botox) injection in her right medial rectus muscle (MR). The alignment was orthotropia 1 week after the injection. She was asymptomatic for about 2 months, but the cyclic pattern returned with a 96 hour cycle by patient history. A repeated 2.5 U Botox injection in right MR, which was given 3 months after the first, produced another asymptomatic period of 2 months. Two months after the second injection, she experienced constant strabismus without cyclic pattern, which persisted for about 1 year. She received right MR recession by 4 mm and right lateral rectus muscle recession by 5 mm for constant esotropia of 25 prism dioptres. After surgery, the alignment was orthotropic and no recurrence of the cyclic pattern during 1 month of follow up. The stereopsis was 200 seconds of arc by Titmus test.

Comment
Adult onset cyclic strabismus is rare and, to the best of our knowledge, only 10 patients have been reported. The reported cases of adult onset cyclic strabismus are summarised in table 1. The patients had various ages of onset between 21 and 67 years. Most reported cases demonstrated 48 hour cyclic patterns. The persistence of the cycles, if not interrupted by surgery, was as long as 7 years. It is interesting that adult onset cyclic strabismus occurs predominantly in females and is frequently related to ocular or orbital diseases, trauma, or surgery. Botulinum toxin has been used as treatment of cyclic strabismus. However, no change of the cyclic pattern was mentioned. We noted that the cyclic pattern in our patient changed 3 months after the first Botox injection, and the cycles were eliminated 2 months after the second injection.

The characteristics of cyclic strabismus in children are an average age of onset between 3 and 4 years, moderate hyperopia, and moderate angle. However, a female preponderance was not noted in childhood onset cyclic esotropia. No pertinent explanation for cyclic strabismus has been reported. Although Botox only has a temporary effect, both Botox injection and eye muscle surgery produce good ocular alignment results. More evidence and further investigation are required to elucidate the mystery.

Acknowledgements
The authors thank Professor William F Hoyt and Professor Craig S Hoyt for their review and criticism of this letter.

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Department of Ophthalmology, University of California, San Francisco, San Francisco, CA, USA

Table 1 Summary of the adult onset cyclic strabismus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case No</th>
<th>Age of onset (years)</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Cyclic pattern</th>
<th>Duration of cycles</th>
<th>Angle (Δ)</th>
<th>Related diseases or conditions</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>4 days</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>ET 35</td>
<td>Optic atrophy both eyes, alcohol abuse</td>
<td>No treatment</td>
<td>Frenkel²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2 days</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>ET 35</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>No treatment</td>
<td>Frenkel²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2 days</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>XT 15, RHT 30</td>
<td>Graves' disease</td>
<td>No treatment</td>
<td>Helveston²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2 days</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>RHT 25</td>
<td>Graves' disease</td>
<td>No treatment</td>
<td>Krapp³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>5 days</td>
<td>ET 25, RHT 8</td>
<td></td>
<td>RD RE, 360° encircling scleral buckling procedure RE, cyclic mydriasis and ptosis</td>
<td>No treatment</td>
<td>Troost³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2 days</td>
<td>9 weeks</td>
<td>UHT 20, XT 10</td>
<td>Craniofacial surgery for fronto-orbital fibrous dysplasia, left side</td>
<td>No treatment</td>
<td>Metz³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2 days</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>ET 12 to 45</td>
<td>ECCE RE, high myopia RE</td>
<td>No treatment</td>
<td>Riordan-Eva³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>5 days?</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>ET 25</td>
<td>RD RE, vitreoretinectomy and silicone oil exchange RE</td>
<td>No treatment</td>
<td>Riordan-Eva³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2 days</td>
<td>7 years</td>
<td>RHT 15, ET 25</td>
<td>Prophylactic encircling band surgery LE</td>
<td>No treatment</td>
<td>Bagheri³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2 days</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>ET 30</td>
<td>Recurrent pterygia in both eyes</td>
<td>No treatment</td>
<td>Present report</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Information provided by Dr Eugene Helveston [personal communication]. NA, not available; CPP, cyclic pattern persisted; Δ, prism dioptre; ET, esotropia; XT, exotropia; RHT, right hypertropia; UHT, left hypertropia; OR, orthotropia; RD, retinal detachment; PVR, proliferative vitreoretinopathy; ECCE, extracapsular cataract extraction; PVT, posterior vitreotomy.

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Figure 1 (A) “Good day”—orthotropia; (B) “Bad day”—esotropia.
Hand hygiene in routine glaucoma clinics

Nosocomial infection occurs via the hands of healthcare workers (HCWs). Hand hygiene reduces hospital infection rates; however, HCWs seldom comply with this.

We determined how often ophthalmologists and allied professionals cleaned their hands and whether intervention was effective.

Participants, methods, and results

We conducted the study in the daily glaucoma clinics of Moorfields Eye Hospital where policy states that all HCWs must clean their hands between patients.

Data were analysed using χ² contingency tests. 5-FU = 5-fluorouracil.

Table 1 Effect of intervention on hand hygiene compliance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hand hygiene before intervention</th>
<th>Hand hygiene after intervention</th>
<th>p Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No (%)</td>
<td>No (%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hand hygiene opportunities</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>0.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hand hygiene episodes before patient contact</td>
<td>36 (14)</td>
<td>73 (25)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hand hygiene episodes during patient contact</td>
<td>8 (3)</td>
<td>8 (3)</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total hand hygiene episodes</td>
<td>44 (18)</td>
<td>81 (28)</td>
<td>0.005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hand hygiene episodes for procedures</td>
<td>2/7 (0/1 for 5-FU)</td>
<td>6/7 (3/3 for 5-FU)</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex of healthcare worker</td>
<td>32/107 (30)</td>
<td>62/115 (54)</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>12/133 (9)</td>
<td>20/182 (11)</td>
<td>0.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profession of healthcare worker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor</td>
<td>21/191 (11)</td>
<td>44/220 (20)</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurse</td>
<td>18/26 (69)</td>
<td>25/43 (58)</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optometrist</td>
<td>3/19 (16)</td>
<td>8/26 (31)</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2/8 (25)</td>
<td>1/7 (14)</td>
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Only three out of nine examination bays were observed for 1 hour at a time, in random order, during morning (from 09:30 to 12:30) and afternoon (from 14:00 to 17:00) clinics.

References


Hand hygiene after manipulative procedures, and after glove removal. Manipulative procedures were defined as 5-fluorouracil subconjunctival injection, taking an eye swab, suture, or supramid removal, and bleb needling or massage.

Without revealing how the study was conducted, preliminary results were presented and also distributed by memo. Two weeks after this intervention, hand hygiene was re-monitored for 1 week.

Baseline hand hygiene episodes were 18% but increased significantly to 28% (p = 0.005) following intervention (table 1). Before intervention two out of seven people performing procedures cleaned their hands, but not for the single episode that 5-fluorouracil was used. However, after intervention six out of seven HCWs cleaned their hands (p = 0.04), including all three episodes in which 5-fluorouracil was handled.

Before intervention, female HCWs cleaned their hands significantly more than males (30% vs 9%, p = 0.001). After intervention hand hygiene increased further for females (54%, p = 0.001) with no change for males (11%, p = 0.57).

Nurses had the highest frequency of hand cleaning but with no change after intervention (69% vs 58%, p = 0.36). Increased hand hygiene was significant for doctors following intervention (11% vs 20%, p = 0.01).

Comment

Recently, nosocomial infection has attracted considerable media interest. While problematic worldwide, the United Kingdom has one of the highest rates of methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA). The hands of HCWs are a major route of transmission. Hand hygiene frequencies range from 3%, increasing to more than 60% when HCWs are aware of being observed.

In our study, hand hygiene was low (18%). Although significant improvement followed intervention (28%) this was far from the hospital standard. Our new level of hand cleaning is likely to be transient as all but one study has demonstrated sustained improvement.

Spatial differences in hand washing are explained by the social role theory—that is, females are communal whereas men are agentic. Hence, women are more likely than men to participate in socially acceptable behaviour such as hand washing. In our study, intervention produced a significant improvement in hand hygiene for females with no effect on males. Behaviourally, men are less easily influenced than women, which may explain why intervention had no effect on male HCWs.

As with previous studies we found the highest frequency of hand hygiene (69%). This could be because最多的nurses are female or because of an emphasis on hand washing in their undergraduate training. However, with our nurses hand hygiene did not increase following intervention. Possibly few nurses were present at the lecture, hence, they only received written information concerning initial study results.

As observed by others, we found hand hygiene among doctors was low (11%). However, intervention had its greatest effect on the doctors (p = 0.01). Although numbers are small, intervention had a positive effect on manipulative procedures, especially when using 5-fluorouracil.

Our study demonstrates that hospital policy is not being practised. Getting HCWs to clean their hands has been an ongoing struggle since Semmelweiss. It has been suggested that patients should ask their healthcare professional to hand wash. Although controversial, this may help in the eradication of hospital acquired infection.

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month. His ANCA had become positive by haemoptysis, and new vasculitic skin lesions. Topical prednisolone acetate 1% hourly was commenced to both eyes. Mycophenolate mofetil 2 g daily was continued. Examination showed subconjunctival haemorrhage, constricted scleral vessels, corneal infiltrates, optic disc swelling, and subjective resolution of ocular pain. At 7 months after the infusion, the patient remained in remission. His systemic treatment was slowly reduced to prednisolone 15 mg daily and mycophenolate mofetil 750 mg twice daily.

Comment
Rituximab is a humanised monoclonal antibody against the CD20 antigen that is expressed on the cell surface during early pre-B cell development and persists through all stages of B cell differentiation. It results in rapid depletion of CD20 positive B lymphocytes from the circulating blood and is well tolerated. The precise role of B cells in the pathogenesis of WG remains elusive at present, but several possibilities exist. B cells can act as antigen presenting cells to T cells or provide additional co-stimulatory signals for T cells. Another possibility is that self-reactive B cells, derived from unusual B cell subsets, may follow a particular maturation pathway, including the expression of CD20 during antibody production.

There has been no report on its effect on WG associated scleritis. Our patient was given rituximab primarily for his generalised vasculitis, but his refractory scleritis also responded promptly. Although he also received cyclophosphamide at the same time, the dose and course were limited to avoid toxicity. Therefore, in this case the prompt improvement was attributed to rituximab, rather than cyclophosphamide. This is the first case reporting rituximab as an effective treatment for refractory WG associated scleritis.


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Retinopathy is not the only oculary symptom: myasthenia gravis in association with interferon therapy

Interferons (IFNs) have antiviral and antimitogenic effects and are often used in the treatment of viral hepatitis or some neoplasms. However, they have various side effects including fever, nausea, depression, retinopathy, and autoimmune diseases. Although myasthenia gravis (MG) is rarely associated with IFN therapy, some cases developing MG after IFN or IFN/ribavirin combined therapy for chronic active hepatitis C have been reported.1,2 We report such a case by reviewing the clinical data.

Case report
A 69 year old man with chronic hepatitis C for 11 years had been treated with IFN-α monotherapy (IFN 6 x 10^6 IU three times a week after 2 weeks of daily injections). The first treatment started in April 2002. There was no complication noted during treatment. After the therapy hepatitis C virus activity settled for a while, but during the observation his clinical data showed a rise in hepatitis C virus RNA and aminotransferases. He underwent IFN-α therapy conjugated with ribavirin (IFN 6 x 10^6 IU three times a week after 2 weeks of daily injections, ribavirin 800 mg twice a day) again on 6 December 2002. During the course his condition drifted periodically, mainly in terms of retinopathy. He had finished 7 months of treatment without significant side effects.

Around December 2003 he began to notice fluctuating diplopia. Examination revealed his usual right adduction, contralateral left/ right hypertropia. Since his condition drifted and there was no significant disorder on magnetic resonance imaging, MG was suspected and electromygraphy chloride was tested. With the medication, his diplopia prominently improved and MG was diagnosed; however, there was no elevation in his anti-acetylcholine receptor antibody titre or other auto-antibodies, and thymoma was not detected.

It is well known that IFN therapy induces a host of non-specific side effects including fever, nausea, depression, retinopathy, and autoimmune diseases. Although myasthenia gravis (MG) is rarely associated with IFN therapy, some cases developing MG after IFN or IFN/ribavirin combined therapy for chronic active hepatitis C have been reported.1,2 We report such a case by reviewing the clinical data.

References

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because of the complex immunological effects of IFNs, including enhanced lymphocyte cytotoxicity, inhibition of T suppressor cell function, increased expression of major histocompatibility complex (MHC) class I antigens, production of proinflammatory cytokines, and differentiation of antigen presenting cell activation of T helper lymphocytes by autoantigens. Some or all of them might contribute to the development of autoimmune disease. 

In this case the patient had no sign of MG or other autoimmune disease before the IFN treatment. His symptom is limited only to extraocular muscles: the condition is relatively mild. That is consistent with the previous report referring to the relation between the severity and the presence of a history of autoimmune disease; but the fact that anti-acetylcholine receptor antibody titre was not elevated is contradictory. We could not establish the causality.

These days many patients with chronic active hepatitis C virus receive IFN or IFN/Viivirin combined therapy. We usually examine these patients only in terms of retinopathy. Although this case could be a coincidental sporadic autoimmune disorder, we should take MG into consideration. We should recognise the risk of development or worsening of MG and be careful in managing patients undergoing therapy, especially when they already have MG or compatible symptoms. It can be a serious complication although it is very rare.

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References

Tobacco-alcohol amblyopia: a maculopathy?

Tobacco-alcohol amblyopia or toxic-nutritional optic neuropathy is a condition characterised by papillomacular bundle damage, central or caecocentral scotoma, and reduction of colour vision in a patient who abuses tobacco and alcohol. There is consensus that nutritional deficiency has an important role as well. The appearance of the optic nerve is usually normal, but peripapillary dilated vessels and haemorrhages have been described. Testing with static perimetry often reveals central scotomas. Although this syndrome has been classified as optic neuropathy, the primary lesion has not actually been localised to the optic nerve and may possibly originate in the retina, chiasm, or even the optic tracts. We report two cases of tobacco-alcohol amblyopia and their electro-physiological findings after testing with multifocal electroretinography (MERG).

Case reports

Case 1

A 47 year old woman presented with a gradual decrease in vision over 4 months. Her medical history showed that she has been in excellent health. She smoked one pack of cigarettes per week and had two to three beers daily. She denied any use of any medications in the past few months. She and her husband have been on a diet which contained fewer vegetables than their normal intake, for 4 months. Family history was unremarkable.

Visual acuity was 20/50 right eye and 20/100 left eye. Colour vision using the pseudoisochromatic plates was four of eight in right eye and two of eight in left eye. Intraocular pressure was 12 mm Hg right eye and 15 mm Hg left eye. She had normal anterior segment in both eyes. Her pupils were sluggish to direct stimulation of light with no afferent defect. Ocular motility was normal. Funduscopy showed anomalous optic nerves with no pallor, and normal maculas. Testing with 24-2 static perimetry revealed an inferior and nasal defect in the right eye; superonasal, inferior, and central defect in the left eye (fig 1A). Humphrey 10-2 static perimetry showed bilateral caecocentral scotomas (fig 1B). Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) of the brain and orbit with and without contrast was normal. Serology tests for Lyme and antinuclear antibodies (ANA) were negative. Complete blood count, serum vitamin B12, and folate were within normal limits. MERG testing showed severe reduction in amplitude mostly centrally in both eyes (fig 2).

Case 2

A 55 year old woman presented with progressive decrease in vision of both eyes over 1 month. She had a history of multiple intracranial aneurysms that were clipped 15 years earlier. She was not using any medications. She smoked one pack of cigarettes a day for 25 years and has five to eight drinks per week. Family history was positive for glaucoma in her mother. Visual acuity was counting fingers at 1 foot right eye and at 2 feet left eye. She could not identify any of the pseudoisochromatic colour plates in both eyes. She had normal anterior segment in both eyes. Pupillary reactions were sluggish to light stimulation with no afferent defect. Funduscopy showed mildly swollen optic nerves in both eyes (fig 3). Kinetic perimetry...
showed bilateral central scotomas. A CT scan (with and without contrast agent) of the brain and orbit was normal. Complete blood count, serum vitamin B12, and folate were within normal limits. Genetic testing of mitochondrial DNA for Leber’s hereditary optic neuropathy showed that the patient has the LHON 3460 G mutation. Multifocal ERG was performed and showed decreased amplitudes centrally with normal latency (fig 4).

Comment
We describe two cases of “tobacco-alcohol amblyopia in patients who had a history of high alcohol intake (cases 1 and 2) and shortly after dietary alteration (case 1). In both cases, MERG testing showed decreased amplitudes in the central region, suggesting retinal dysfunction in the macula. The condition of the patient in case 2 may have been precipitated by a metabolic injury (tobacco, alcohol) to genetically “compromised” mitochondria. This shows the clinical overlap in conditions of inherited mitochondrial dysfunction and acquired ones such as tobacco-alcohol amblyopia."

The clinical findings seen in tobacco-alcohol amblyopia can occur in any disease of anterior visual pathway from the retina to the optic tract and there is little evidence to suggest that the locus of pathology is restricted to the optic nerve. Histopathological studies on animal models of nutritional amblyopia showed lesions in the retina, optic nerve and tract, and the maculopapillary bundle. Electrophysiological abnormalities in animal models of tobacco-alcohol amblyopia showed reduced amplitudes with normal latencies using visual evoked potentials, increased a-wave and b-wave implicit times and decreased b-wave amplitudes using full field electroretinograms.

MERG signals are believed to arise from the inner retina (photoreceptor and bipolar cell layer) with only minimal contribution from the inner retina and optic nerve (ganglion cells and nerve fibre layer). Therefore, the severe reduction in amplitudes in our patients suggests that the outer retina, particularly in the macula, is involved in this condition.

References
prior focal photocoagulation can cause local hot spots in large TTT treatment fields." Additionally, local choroidal blood flow may have been altered by vascular remodelling that occurred in the 14 days between the intense focal laser photocoagulation that the authors performed. It is likely that local heat conduction is altered significantly by the initial photocoagulation or subsequent tissue remodelling because heat conduction in most normal biological tissues is essentially the same as that of water.

References


NOTICES

World Ophthalmology Congress 2006 – Brazil

The World Ophthalmology Congress (which is replacing the International Congress of Ophthalmology) is meeting in February 2006 in Brazil. For further information on the congress and committees, scientific program and coordinators of different areas are available at the congress website www.ophthalmology2006.com.br

Vision 2020

The latest issue of Community Eye Health (No 54) assesses the progress of Vision 2020 at the district level. For further information please contact: Journal of Community Eye Health, International Resource Centre, International Centre for Eye Health, Department of Infectious and Tropical Diseases, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Keppel Street, London WC1E 7HT, UK (tel: +44 (0)20 7612 7964; email: Anita.Shah@lshtm.ac.uk; online edition: www.jech.co.uk). Annual subscription (4 issues) UK £28/US$45. Free to developing country applicants.

CORRECTIONS

In the letter titled, Patient satisfaction with anaesthesia comparing sun-Tenon’s block and topical anaesthesia (Br J Ophthalmol 2005;89:1228) the second author was omitted. The second author for this letter was R W D Bell, Sunderland Eye Infirmary, Queen Alexandria Road, Sunderland SR2 9HP, UK. The author apologises for this omission.

In the paper titled, En-face optical coherence tomography (OCT): A new method to analyse structural changes of the optic nerve head in rat glaucoma (Br J Ophthalmol 2005;89:1210–6) one of the author’s name has been spelt incorrectly. The author Podoleanu AG, should be spelt Podoleanu AG. The journal apologises for this error.
TTT: local light absorption and heat convection versus heat conduction

M A Mainster and D H Silney

Br J Ophthalmol 2005 89: 1545
doi: 10.1136/bjo.2005.082453

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Primary nasolacrimal duct malignant mucosal melanoma

Primary nasolacrimal duct malignancy is rare. Only a few tumours have been reported originating from this location including lymphoma, Kaposi’s sarcoma, adenocarcinoma, angiofibroma, and squamous cell carcinoma. Mucosal melanoma represents 1–2% of all melanomas, with 25–50% in the head and neck—that is, upper respiratory tract, oral cavity, and pharynx. Other sites include urinary, female genital, and ano-rectal tracts. These tumours are uncommon, present in the fifth to eighth decades, have slight male preponderance and are more common in darker skinned individuals. Cutaneous melanoma presents two decades earlier and is more common in white people and is associated with sun exposure.

Case report

A 41 year old Asian male presented to the oculoplastic service with a 3 month history of right sided intermittent bloody tears and epistaxis. He described right simple epiphora for at least 2 years treated with a three snip procedure. Probing the right nasolacrimal system confirmed normal canaliculi and easy entry of the probe into the lacrimal sac. Irrigation demonstrated complete nasolacrimal duct block and reflux of dark bloody tears. Nasal endoscopy (rigid Hopkins nasal endoscope) revealed a greyish mass emerging from the lower end of the nasolacrimal duct into the inferior meatus (fig 1).

Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and computed tomography (CT) scans (fig 2) demonstrated dilation of the entire length of the nasolacrimal bony canal with a soft tissue mass occupying the lumen of the nasolacrimal duct. The mass was invading the osteomeatal complex, extending into the anterior ethmoidal sinus, causing obstruction to drainage of both maxillary and frontal sinuses.

A transnasal incisional biopsy of the inferior meatus lesion was performed under local anaesthetic. Histopathological analysis of the biopsy showed sheets of epithelioid cells with prominent nucleoli and vesicular cells on a routine haematoxylin and eosin stain (fig 3). Although the lesion was pale, pigment was visible on the haematoxylin and eosin stain, suggestive of melanoma. Immunohistochemical studies were positive for immunological markers HMB45 and S100 protein, confirming a diagnosis of melanoma.

No regional lymphadenopathy was present and PET (positron emission tomography) scan excluded the presence of metastases.

Wide local cranio-facial-orbital resection of the tumour was performed, via a lateral rhinotomy approach (fig 4). The nasolacrimal duct, part of the lateral wall of the nose, the lacrimal sac, distal upper and lower canaliculi, and inferomedial orbital fat were excised. Tumour extended into the maxilla but not into the lacrimal sac. Perioperative frozen sections from the excision margins, including orbital fat, demonstrated clearance of tumour. This allowed preservation of the eye.

Adjunctive therapy was given to limit local recurrence and distant spread. The patient received 20 sessions of radiotherapy (30 Gy) to the right maxillary antrum, and also immunotherapeutic therapy (vaccination with autologous dendritic cells pulsed with allogenic tumour lysate, and whole body hyperthermia accompanied by low dose interferon).

Three years after presentation there was no local recurrence of tumour. Unfortunately, the patient developed bone pain and CT scan revealed metastatic spread to the right acetabulum and T8, T9, and T11 vertebrae with localised spinal cord compression. He underwent radiotherapy to the right acetabulum and spine. The patient died approximately 6 months later.

Comment

Nasolacrimal duct primary mucosal melanoma is previously unreported. The closest relations are lacrimal sac melanoma (5% of lacrimal sac tumours) and sinonasal mucosal melanoma (5% of all sinonasal malignancy). Lacrimal sac melanoma can present with epiphora, bloody tears, and epistaxis. Sinonasal melanoma can present with nasal obstruction and epistaxis. Orbital extension causes proptosis and diplopia. Both lacrimal sac melanoma and sinonasal melanoma are insidious in onset with poor visibility leading to late presentation.

Standard treatment of primary sinonasal melanoma is radical wide local surgical excision. Local recurrence can occur and the very vascular nature of mucosal tissue makes regional and distant metastases common, often accompanying late presentation. Postsurgical radiotherapy may prevent local recurrence, but is unlikely to prevent distant metastases. Other adjunctive treatments are not clinically proved to be beneficial. Chemotherapy has no positive effect, and newer immunological treatments are still under investigation.

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Comment

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Sinonasal mucosal melanoma has a high mortality rate, with 5 year survival between 10–50%.

Lacrimal sac melanoma has a similar prognosis.

This case demonstrates the importance of thorough clinical examination (including nasal endoscopy) and imaging in patients presenting with epiphora, bloody tears, and/or epistaxis. Delay in detection and treatment may be fatal.

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Competing interests: none declared.

References

Glycosylation type lc disorder: idiopathic intracranial hypertension and retinal degeneration

We report a young woman with type lc congenital disorder of glycosylation (CDG) with new clinical features of idiopathic intracranial hypertension, retinal degeneration, and novel mutations of ALG6. Patients with known or suspected CDG should receive a full ophthalmic examination including dilated fundus examination and electroretinography.

CDG is a rare group of autosomal recessive metabolic disorders. The two major subgroups are type I, caused by dysfunction of glycosylated protein assembly, and type II, caused by abnormal processing of glycosylated protein end products after assembly. Patients with type lc (OMIM #603147) have mental retardation, axial hypotonia, very low factor XI, and seizures; the gene defect in X-linked glycosyltransferase (human homologue of ALG6;OMIM *604566) encodes an enzyme that catalyses the transfer of the first glucose residue to the lipid linked oligosaccharide precursor for N-linked glycosylation. The reported ophthalmic manifestations of type I CDG are summarised in table 1. We report a case of type lc congenital disorder of glycosylation with new clinical features of idiopathic intracranial hypertension, retinal degeneration and novel mutations of ALG6.

Case report

Our patient, with non-consanguineous parents, was noted at birth to have incomplete digits on her hands and feet. She had episodes of apnoea early in life and the onset of seizures at age 20 months. Delayed physiological and developmental milestones were evident early. Levels of follicle stimulating hormone and luteinising hormone were low and a diagnosis of polycystic ovarian disease was made. She underwent esotropia surgery at age 4 years and at 19 years developed thrombosis of the superficial femoral vein. Coagulation factor studies revealed very low factor XI levels. Isoelectric focusing of serum transferrin was suggestive of a congenital disorder of glycosylation. Sequencing of the ALG6 gene showed a novel three base substitution, in the gene encoding factor XI A1,3-glucosyltransferase (OMIM #601785) gene. In CDG type lc, much less common, a homozygous amino acid substitution, A33V substitution, in the gene encoding 1,3-glucosyltransferase is the most common mutation.

There is no known biochemical link between CDG and idiopathic intracranial hypertension; the association in our patient may be coincidental. Grunwald and colleagues1 found strabismus to be present in all eight patients with CDG type lc; neither idiopathic intracranial hypertension nor retinal abnormalities were reported.

The developmental delay evident in our patient was severe. She possessed simple communication skills limiting her ability to complain of visual changes or symptoms of intracranial hypertension. No specific clinical presentation has been identified for the CDG group of diseases. Failure to thrive, unexplained seizures, hypotonia, and developmental delays are all frequently present.

In conclusion, we report an adult patient with CDG type lc, confirmed by identification of mutations in the ALG6 gene, and describe new systemic and ocular features including idiopathic intracranial hypertension.

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<tr>
<th>Table 1</th>
<th>Reported ophthalmic manifestations in type I congenital disorder of glycosylation (CDG)</th>
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<td>CDG la</td>
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<td>Strabismus</td>
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<td>Retinopathy</td>
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<td>Optic atrophy</td>
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Figure 1 Left fundus showing attenuated vessels with retinal pigment cell granularity of the macula (white arrow).
Woodhouse Sakati syndrome associated with bilateral keratoconus

Keratoconus is a non-inflammatory degenerative corneal disease characterised by a localised region of stromal thinning spatially associated with a cone-shaped deformation of the surface. It is most commonly an isolated sporadic condition.1 Recent reports demonstrate genetic mapping to chromosomes 16q, 21q, and 18p, as well as association of HLA-A26, B40, and DR 9.8 Keratoconus has been reported in clinical contexts with 36 other multisystem disorders.1,4 We describe the first two cases of keratoconus in association with Woodhouse Sakati syndrome.

Case report

Two sisters (aged 14 years and 18 years) presented with history of bilateral progressive loss of vision over 8 years. Progeny of a first degree consanguineous marriage, they were the only members in the family of six siblings with a diagnosis of Woodhouse Sakati syndrome. Both sisters exhibited variable manifestations of the syndrome including hypogonadism, primary amenorrhoea, hypothroidism, electrocardiographic abnormalities, and dysmorphic features. The elder sister also had a mild degree of mental retardation. None of their siblings or parents had eye complaints but a maternal aunt’s daughter had bilateral keratoconus.

Ophthalmic evaluation of the older sister revealed uncorrected visual acuity (UCVA) of 20/200 in both eyes. Her refraction was −19.0 −8.0×120 in the right eye and −9.0 −3.75×165 in the left eye. Spectacles improved only left eye vision slightly to 20/160. Slit lamp biomicroscopy showed bilateral central corneal protrusion and stromal thinning at the apex (fig 1A). Keratometry was 71.00/63.00 @ 68 in the right eye and 53.00/49.50 @ 135 in the left eye. Hard contact lens fitting failed and surgical intervention was not conducted.

Ophthalmic evaluation of the younger sister revealed UCVA of 20/40 in the right eye and 20/160 in the left eye, which improved to 20/80 with spectacles. Slit lamp biomicroscopy showed similar findings to her sister (fig 1B). Keratometry was 36.6 D/54.1 D @ 170 in the right eye and 49.2 D/56.6 D @ 46 in the left eye. She developed corneal hydrops in the left eye and contact lens fitting failed. Because of central corneal scarring and progressive deterioration of her left eye vision, she underwent penetrating keratoplasty (fig 1C). Fourteen months post-operatively, UCVA was 20/50, improving to 20/30 with pin hole.

Comment

Woodhouse Sakati syndrome (MIM 241080) is an extremely rare genetically determined autosomal recessive disorder. It was first described in two Saudi Arabian families,5 and later reported in a single Turkish family.6 Table 1 presents manifestations of the syndrome.5,6 We report a new association in our two cases. Such concurrence of early keratoconus and the syndrome raises the possibility of a genetic linkage, although a chance association cannot be excluded.

On one hand, either chromosomal rearrangements such as chromosome 7, 11 translocation or genetically determined syndromes such as this syndrome should be considered in cases where keratoconus is present during childhood. That may explain the early presentation of keratoconus in our cases. An additional factor is that keratoconus tends to be more prevalent and diagnosed at a younger age in Asians than in white people.7

On the other hand, familial keratoconus in our cases cannot be excluded because of the presence of keratoconus in a single relative and parental consanguinity. Positive family history has been reported in 6% to 10% of keratoconus cases and is suggested to be caused by autosomal dominant inheritance with incomplete penetrance.8

To the best of our knowledge, this is the first report of bilateral keratoconus in association with Woodhouse Sakati syndrome. Ophthalmologists and endocrinologists should be aware that patients with this syndrome who complain of poor vision should be suspected of having keratoconus once other more common conditions are ruled out.

References


Figure 1 Features of keratoconus are seen. (A) Slit lamp biomicroscopy of the right cornea in the elder patient, showing advanced cone deformation and deep Descemet’s membrane scarring. (B) Slit lamp biomicroscopy of the left cornea in the younger patient, showing dense central scarring following hydrops attack. (C) Histopathological section of left corneal button illustrating the fragmentation of Bowman’s layer (large arrow) and large break in Descemet’s membrane (small arrows) (periodic acid Schiff stain, ×200).

Table 1 Variable manifestations in the nine reported patients with Woodhouse Sakati syndrome

| Delayed psychomotor development |
| Variable degree of mental retardation (very frequent sign) |
| Alapoezia (very frequent sign), sparse/absent scalp and eyebrow hair (frequent sign), dysarthria |
| Dysomorphic features: high forehead, flat occiput, triangular face, prominent nasal root, hypertelorism, and down-slanting palpebral fissures |
| Hyper/hypothyroidism, hypogonadism and late puberty (very frequent sign) |
| Sensorineural deafness (very frequent sign) |
| Electrocardiographic abnormalities and insulin dependent diabetes mellitus (very frequent signs) |

No ocular manifestations

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Retinal ischaemia in type 1 neurofibromatosis

Systemic occlusive arteriopathy associated with type 1 neurofibromatosis (NF-1) has been well described in the aortic and cerebral vasculature; however, it is poorly documented in the retinal vasculature with, to our knowledge, only three reported patients whose retinal vasculopathy was diagnosed at a later sequelae stage. We report the case of a young woman with NF-1 who presented with acute macular ischaemia combined with diffuse retinal arterial occlusive disease.

Case report

A 26 year old woman with NF-1 presented with a sudden painless loss of vision in her left eye. Visual acuity was counting fingers left eye and 20/20 right eye. NF-1 had previously been diagnosed on the basis of multiple café au lait spots, plexiform neurofibromas, and a paternal history of NF-1. Left fundus examination revealed confluent cottonwool spots in the perifoveal area, focal dilatations and narrowings of retinal venules, and progressive enlargement of retinal arterioles towards the periphery. The right fundus showed only peripapillary myelinated nerve fibres (fig 1).

Fluorescein angiography (FA) of the left eye showed no delayed perfusion in the choriocapillaris or central retinal artery, but a delayed retinal arteriogenous filling time. It revealed occlusion of macular arterioles, retinal arteriogenous communications in the mid-periphery, and a relatively well perfused retinal periphery (fig 2).

Cerebral and cervical magnetic resonance imaging and colour Doppler ultrasonography showed no vascular flow abnormalities. Internal medical examination and laboratory results excluded other diseases associated with retinal microvasculopathies.

One month after the initial examination, all the cottonwool spots disappeared, and sheathing appeared in a few veins. FA showed worsening of the retinal arteriogenous occlusions in the mid-periphery (fig 2). A panretinal photocoagulation was subsequently performed. At 2 year follow up, left visual acuity remained unchanged, and the patient did not exhibit any preretinal fibrovascular proliferation.

Comment

To our knowledge, only three cases of retinal vascular occlusion in patients with NF-1 have been previously reported. All cases were diagnosed at a later sequelae stage. Moadel et al and Kadri et al respectively, reported the cases of a child who presented with an unilateral amblyopia, and a young woman with a history of unilateral poor vision. They both presented with diffuse sheathing of retinal vessels, retinal arteriogenous communications, and avascular peripheral retina with fibroglial proliferation. Tholen et al described a young man whose routine eye examination showed narrowing of a superotemporal retinal artery with irregular diameter of the corresponding vein, fibroglial proliferation, and arteriogenous communications. These authors suggested the possibility of either a primary occlusion of a retinal arterial or venous branch or alterations of vessel development. In contrast with other reported cases, our patient presented with acute unilateral occlusion of macular arterioles, combined with diffuse retinal arterial occlusive disease, in adulthood. Panretinal photocoagulation may have prevented fibroglial proliferation which was described in previous reported cases. Recent reports suggest that pathogenesis of NF-1 vasculopathy may result from dysfunction of neurofibromin, the NF-1 gene product, in vessel endothelial and smooth muscle cells.

Our case shows that NF-1 related occlusive retinal arteriopathy may suddenly appear during adulthood and should be considered in patients with NF-1 or in young adults with retinal vascular occlusive disease and unknown NF-1.

Figure 1  Fundus photographs of the left and the right eyes at presentation. (A) Colour fundus photograph of the left eye showing large confluent cottonwool spots in the perifoveal area. (B) Colour fundus photograph of the right eye showing peripapillary myelinated nerve fibres. (C) Red-free fundus photograph of the left eye. Upper periphery showing focal dilatations and narrowings of retinal veins, and capillary rarefaction. Retinal arteriogenous communications are also present (arrows).

Figure 2  Fluorescein retinal angiography of the left eye, 40 seconds after dye injection, at presentation (A) and 1 month later (B). (A) Occlusion of macular arteries and retinal arteriogenous communications are visible (black arrow). (B) Retinal arteriogenous occlusions have worsened in the temporal periphery.

References


Are biometric parameters a risk factor for idiopathic macular hole formation? Results of a matched case-control series

Recognised risk factors for the formation of idiopathic full thickness macular holes (IFMTH) include age, female, sex, and high myopia.1 2 However, we noticed that patients with HFTMH within our population, tended to have shorter than normal axial lengths. An age and sex matched case-control study was
Consecutive patients undergoing surgery for IFTMH had age, sex, axial length in milli-
metres (mm), and corneal keratometry (K) measurements in dioptres (D) recorded.
For each case three age and sex matched controls were randomly identified from a
cataract surgery database (Medisoft). Biometric measurements were made in all
cases and controls using the IOL-Master (Zeiss, Jena). Mean corneal curvature was
calculated by averaging the two K readings. Descriptive statistics and conditional logis-
tic regression method for analysis of matched pair data were used to infer estimates.

Results
Thirty five consecutive cases and 105 controls
were identified with a mean age of 67.3 years
(range 40.56–77 years) and a female to male ratio
of 24:11. The mean (SD) axial length in the
cases was 23.48 (1.44) mm. The axial
lengths of the cases also fell within a
narrower range than those of the controls
it was 23.48 (1.44) mm. The axial
length of the controls was also found to be similar to
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Comment
As in previous studies our population sample
demonstrates an increased risk of IFTMH in females with most cases clustering in the 60–
70 year age group. The mean axial length in controls was also found to be similar to
results in the published literature.

Mean spherical equivalence (MSE) was measured by the Eye Disease Case Control Study Group and although their findings were statistically insignificant, their regression analysis found an increased likelihood of hypermetropia in the IFTMH cases. Our cases clustered in a relatively narrow range of axial
lengths (21 mm–25.31 mm in the cases compared to 20.64 mm–29.48 mm in the controls) with the maximum axial length in the cases being 25.31 mm (fig 1). In Japanese
literature, high myopia is a prominent, recognised risk factor and in one study the
overall mean MSE was ~0.66 D. From our study it appears myopic macular holes are
encountered much less frequently in a pre-
dominantly white population.

We believe the significant corneal dioptic differences found may be a result of the
natural process of enmetropisation of a shorter eye, or alternatively be an indepen-
dent risk factor.

IFTMH are thought to arise from retinal
surface traction which in turn arises from an
abnormal and incomplete posterior vitreous
detachment. Our results suggest that eyes
with shorter than average axial lengths and
therefore lower volume vitreous cavity are either at increased risk of developing such
incomplete and abnormal vitreous detach-
ments or, in the presence of such an incom-
plete vitreous detachment, of developing a
macular hole. We are not aware that shorter
axial length has previously been shown to be
significantly associated with IFTMH.

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Choroiditis and exudative
macular detachments in a post
transplant leukaemic patient: an
unusual presentation of
Pneumocystis jiroveci infection

Pneumocystis jiroveci is a commensal found in
the respiratory tract of healthy individuals. It
can cause infections of almost any organ in
immunocompromised hosts. P jiroveci choroi-
ditis, featuring multifocal choroidal lesions,
has been reported in immunocompromised
patients despite prophylactic use of inhaled
pentamidine. We report a post-transplant
leukaemic patient whose posterior segment
findings demonstrate an atypical picture of
recurrent P jiroveci choroiditis.

Case report
A 20 year old woman presented with a
1 week history of bilateral blurred vision,
dyspnoea, and dry cough. Visual acuity was
reduced to 6/66 bilaterally with posterior
subcapsular cataracts. Funduscopy disclosed
multifocal, creamy-yellow choroidal lesions
at both posterior poles with exudative retinal
detachments at the maculae (fig 1). Optic
disks and retinal vessels were normal.
Fluorescein angiography showed early patchy
hypofluorescence (corresponding to the chor-
oidal lesions) and late hyperfluorescence with
pooling beneath the detachments.

Three years earlier she had undergone a
successful autologous bone marrow transplant
for chronic myeloid leukaemia. Her main-
tenance therapy included inhaled pentami-
dine as prophylaxis against P jiroveci infection.
However, she admitted to not taking her inhaled pentamidine. Molecular genetic and radiological investigations excluded leukaemic recurrence. Chest x ray
showed left lung shadowing and bronchoal-
veolar lavage isolated P jiroveci. P jiroveci pneumonia with P jiroveci choroiditis was
diagnosed and high dose oral co-trimoxazole
7.2 g/day (120 mg/kg/day) and prednisolone
60 mg/day commenced. Within 2 weeks her
respiratory and ocular symptoms improved.
Visual acuities returned to 6/9 and the fundal
appearances resolved. She was discharged on
daily oral co-trimoxazole 960 mg, predniso-
lone 20 mg, and inhaled pentamidine.
Three weeks later she was readmitted with increasing dyspnoea and blurred vision. Chest x ray and computed tomography findings were compatible with diffuse interstitial fibrosis in both lungs. Funduscopy revealed peripapillary choroidal lesions with disc swelling bilaterally (fig 2). This time the choroidal lesions were peripapillary only rather than throughout the posterior pole, with exudative detachments inferiorly. Recurrent P jiroveci pneumonia and choroiditis was diagnosed and oral atovaquone and high dose prednisolone were commenced. Within 3 weeks her fundal appearance resolved leaving only some pigmentary changes. Her discharge medication included daily oral prednisolone 40 mg, cotrimoxazole 960 mg, and inhaled pentamidine. There have been no further intraocular recurrences.

**Comment**

*Pneumocystis jiroveci* is a commensal, found in the respiratory tract of healthy individuals. It can cause infections of almost any organ in immunocompromised hosts. P jiroveci choroiditis has been reported in immunocompromised patients despite prophylactic use of inhaled pentamidine. The diagnosis is based on the clinical findings of multifocal yellowish circular choroidal lesions at the posterior pole. *P jiroveci* has been found in these lesions on histological sections and the lesions resolve on systemic anti-pneumocystis treatment. However, most cases of *P jiroveci* choroiditis are diagnosed histologically post mortem.

Thus, the acute clinical findings may be more varied than previously described. In our patient, massive exudative retinal detachments were associated with the previously described choroidal lesions. The clinical picture varied on the second presentation, but there was complete and rapid resolution of the signs with anti-pneumocystis therapy. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first report of *P jiroveci* choroiditis causing exudative retinal detachments. *P jiroveci* should be considered in the differential diagnosis of susceptible patients, even if the ophthalmological findings are “atypical.”

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***References***


**Figure 1** Multifocal, creamy-yellow choroidal lesions at both posterior poles with massive exudative retinal detachments at the maculae.

**Figure 2** peripapillary choroidal lesions with disc swelling.

***Prothrombotic and atherosclerotic risk factors lack significance in NAION patients harbouring mitochondrial DNA mutations***

We recently reported that a group of patients with non-arteritic anterior ischaemic optic neuropathy (NAION) had an increased prevalence of potentially pathological mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) mutations, implying a link between mitochondrial disease and this optic neuropathy. We decided to investigate the association of other risk factors for NAION in these same patients.

***Case reports***

NAION patients were genotyped for the presence of prothrombotic polymorphisms that have been reported in association with NAION, including factor II G20210A prothrombin variant, factor V Leiden G1691A variant, MTHFR C677T and A1298C variants, platelet glycoprotein receptor IIb (PIIb) allele, and apolipoprotein E (4) allele, as described previously. These reports included large control groups that were ethnically matched to our NAION patients and that had been queried regarding the presence of atherothrombotic risk factors. Controls older than 50 years were selected for comparison with NAION patients. Table 1 shows that the prevalence rates for prothrombotic variants among NAION patients did not differ from controls. Reported prevalence of diabetes, hypertension, and hyperlipidaemia was relatively high in NAION patients but was also not significantly different from controls.

**Comment**

The lack of a significant association between NAION patients and controls in relation to thrombophilic genetics markers has been reported before, and the role of these factors remains uncertain. More surprising is the lack of a statistical association with atherosclerotic risk factors. For example, in our group of NAION patients, 68% were diabetic, but this figure did not differ significantly from the prevalence of more than 50% in well matched controls. This observation reflects the high, and rising, frequency of diabetes and other atherosclerotic risk factors in the developing world.

A few qualifications are appropriate. NAION patients were a relatively small group of Middle Eastern Arabs, and it is possible that a larger group would have yielded statistically significant results or that the observations reported here are specific to this genetically homogeneous population. Atherosclerotic risk factors were assessed by individual report from patients and controls, and the actual prevalence of these disorders may be different from that recognised. Finally, other risk factors, such as homocysteine levels, nocturnal hypotension, or environmental factors were not consistently investigated.

Nevertheless, the fact that the occurrence of NAION cannot be easily explained by the presence of prothrombotic or atherosclerotic risk factors shifts focus to the possibility that mitochondrial abnormalities may be important in the development of NAION. Based on these observations, testing for mitochondrial abnormalities may be warranted in NAION patients, especially the ones without a
medical or family history of a thrombotic or vascular event.

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References

Inflammatory cytokine of basal and reflex tears analysed by multicytokine assay

Tear cytokine has a major role in various pathophysiological conditions of the ocular surface. So far, studies on tear cytokines have shown significant progress in providing an understanding of ocular surface diseases. The information that could be acquired from each subject, however, until recently has been severely hampered by limited sample size and assay sensitivity. More importantly, it has become apparent that the relative balance between various cytokines and combinations of cytokines could be more important than absolute concentrations. Previous studies showed that the composition of basic and reflex tears was different, which made it more difficult to understand the ocular surface disorder correctly or to treat the patients suitably. Other cytokines measured by the assay (cytokine array, CBA) are a microarray-based flow cytometric assay that allows us to quantify multiple molecules from a very small sample. Using this method, we evaluated the inflammatory cytokines of basal and reflex tears from a single sample of individual eyes.

Methods

Twenty three normal volunteers (11 males and 12 females, 22–44 years of age, average 28 years) were recruited for this study. None of the subjects had signs of ocular diseases. The study was performed with the approval of the institutional review board. The basal tear samples of 10–15 μl were obtained from each eye by capillary flow, with no nasal stimulation or previous instillation of drugs or vital dyes. Each sample was collected at 5 pm. No anaesthetic drops were instilled. The samples were collected non-traumatically from the inferior meniscus. Successively, reflex tear samples were collected by inserting application sticks into a participant’s nose. The amounts of six inflammatory molecules interleukin (IL)-1β, IL-6, IL-8, IL-10, IL-12p70, and tumour necrosis factor α (TNF-α), were measured by CBA (BD Biosciences, San Diego, CA, USA), according to the manufacturer’s instructions. Briefly, for the tear sample and cytokine standard mixture, 10 μl of sample or standard were added to 40 μl sterile purified water, a mixture of 50 μl each of capture Ab-bead reagent and detector Ab-phycocerythrin (PE) reagent. The mixture was subsequently incubated for 5 hours at room temperature, and washed to remove any unbound detector-PE reagent before data acquisition using flow cytometry. A two colour flow cytometric analysis was performed using a FACScan flow cytometer (Beckton Dickinson Immunocytometry Systems). Data were acquired and analysed using BD cytometric bead array software.

Results

The concentrations of IL-1β, IL-6, IL-8, IL-10, IL-12p70, and TNF-α were not significantly different between basal and reflex tears. In contrast, the concentration of IL-8 was significantly decreased in reflex tears compared with basal tears in each eye (paired t test, p<0.01, fig 1). In order to illuminate the inter-relationship of each cytokine, the ratio of two different cytokines is shown in table 1.

Comment

Previously published studies have demonstrated that CBA correlates well with enzyme linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA), but the absolute concentrations obtained from each assay were different for kits of different manufacturers. Indeed, the concentrations of tear cytokines in the present results were almost equal to the previous report using the same kit. Nakamura et al performed ELISA for multiple cytokines measuring pooled tears. The pooled tears enable measurement of multiple cytokines; however the results

Table 1  Comparison of risk factors in NAION patients and controls

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk factor</th>
<th>NAION patients</th>
<th>Controls</th>
<th>Odds ratio</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
<th>p Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apo E4 Homo</td>
<td>0/19</td>
<td>0/593</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td>0.60 to 1615.3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor II G20210A Homo</td>
<td>0/19</td>
<td>0/593</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td>0.60 to 1615.3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor V G1691A Hetero</td>
<td>0/19</td>
<td>10/593</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00 to 17.52</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor V G1691A Hetero</td>
<td>0/19</td>
<td>0/200</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>0.20 to 545.6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTHFR C677T Hetero</td>
<td>0/19</td>
<td>12/625</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00 to 13.10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTHFR A1298C Hetero</td>
<td>4/19</td>
<td>161/625</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.21 to 2.52</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTHFR A1298C Hetero</td>
<td>0/19</td>
<td>57/625</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00 to 2.71</td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLT allele Homo</td>
<td>7/19</td>
<td>322/625</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.19 to 1.52</td>
<td>0.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLT allele Hetero</td>
<td>3/19</td>
<td>137/509</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.12–1.89</td>
<td>0.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age, mean (SD)</td>
<td>58.8 (8.5)</td>
<td>57.1 (4.2)</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex (M:F)</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>145:351</td>
<td>1:2.8</td>
<td>0.42 to 4.13</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diabetes</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>256:551</td>
<td>2:1.6</td>
<td>0.75 to 4.67</td>
<td>0.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypertension</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>209:511</td>
<td>1:1.6</td>
<td>0.59 to 4.38</td>
<td>0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hyperlipidaemia</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>2:19</td>
<td>1:9</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.11 to 3.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAD</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>1:19</td>
<td>1:27</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.03 to 4.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NS mtDNA changes</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>14/19</td>
<td>11/100</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>6.03 to 91.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NAION, non-arteritic ischemic optic neuropathy; CAD, coronary artery disease; NS mtDNA changes, non-synonymous (changing an amino acid in the resultant protein) mitochondrial DNA nucleotide change; Hetero, homozygous; Hetero, heterozygous. Diabetes, hypertension, hyperlipidaemia, and CAD were assessed by patient report both from NAION patients and from controls. Controls previously reported for mtDNA changes and for atherosclerotic and prothrombotic risk factors (see text). Odds ratio and p values compare prevalence of different risk factors in NAION patients to controls.
can be strongly influenced by samples with high concentrations. Because the absolute concentrations of tear cytokines varied widely, this can have a strong bias. In this study, to our knowledge, we measured the multiple cytokines of basal and reflex tears from a single sample for the first time, which can provide concentration ranges for these cytokines in normal subjects that may prove important for studies of ocular inflammation. Of note, only the concentration of IL-8 was decreased more significantly in reflex tears than in basal tears. Maitchouk et al showed that there is no distinctive role of major and accessory glands in secreting basal or reflex tears, thus these tears might be produced primarily by the same tissue and differences might be only the result of the secretory rate of reflex tears. It was reported that a neuropeptide released from corneal sensory nerves stimulated conjunctival epithelium to secrete IL-8. Because sensory nerves are present in the cornea so abundantly, IL-8 can be produced constantly on the ocular surface. IL-8 is a potent pro-inflammatory cytokine, and has a pivotal role in the host defense system. But excessive IL-8 might be so harmful that constant washout might be helpful for homeostasis of the ocular surface. Indeed, a large amount of IL-8 was found in the tears of dry eyes. Thus, basal tears might be composed of products of the ocular surface including IL-8 and small amounts of reflex tears that are induced by mild stimulation such as blinks.

In summary, the present study showed that pro-inflammatory and anti-inflammatory cytokines/chemokines are present in the ocular surface even in the absence of inflammation and this was detectable from a small sample of single eyes. Stimulating tears, with the exception of IL-8, has minimal effect on cytokine concentration. We believe the CBA technique can make a valuable contribution in understanding the specific immunopathological mechanisms underlying cytokine interaction with the ocular surface.

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References

Table 1 Ratios of cytokine concentration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B</th>
<th>IL-1b</th>
<th>IL-6</th>
<th>TNF-α</th>
<th>IL-12p70</th>
<th>IL-10</th>
<th>IL-8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(A) Basal tear</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IL-1b</td>
<td>3.022 (0.246)</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IL-6</td>
<td>0.386 (0.037)</td>
<td>0.011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>TNF-α</td>
<td>0.022 (0.002)</td>
<td>0.07 (0.008)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.017 (0.003)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IL-12p70</td>
<td>0.349 (0.026)</td>
<td>0.989 (0.071)</td>
<td>18.269 (2.086)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.592 (0.042)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IL-10</td>
<td>0.087 (0.059)</td>
<td>0.253 (0.02)</td>
<td>4.518 (0.47)</td>
<td>0.261 (0.012)</td>
<td>0.275 (0.028)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IL-8</td>
<td>2.14 (0.34)</td>
<td>5.576 (0.694)</td>
<td>144.913 (45.971)</td>
<td>7.447 (1.546)</td>
<td>28.257 (5.078)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B</th>
<th>IL-1b</th>
<th>IL-6</th>
<th>TNF-α</th>
<th>IL-12p70</th>
<th>IL-10</th>
<th>IL-8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(B) Reflex tear</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IL-1b</td>
<td>3.71 (0.252)</td>
<td>1.000</td>
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<tr>
<td>IL-6</td>
<td>0.304 (0.027)</td>
<td>0.011</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>TNF-α</td>
<td>0.021 (0.001)</td>
<td>0.078 (0.007)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.062 (0.007)</td>
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<tr>
<td>IL-12p70</td>
<td>0.390 (0.023)</td>
<td>1.361 (0.082)</td>
<td>21.357 (3.427)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.254 (0.024)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>IL-10</td>
<td>0.093 (0.005)</td>
<td>0.324 (0.018)</td>
<td>4.837 (0.524)</td>
<td>0.241 (0.007)</td>
<td>0.093 (0.012)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IL-8</td>
<td>1.043 (0.231)</td>
<td>4.779 (0.665)</td>
<td>73.465 (13.897)</td>
<td>4.02 (0.727)</td>
<td>17.235 (3.251)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ratio of cytokine concentration was calculated as A/B. Each cell shows the mean (SEM).
Outcome of implementing the national services framework guidelines for diabetic retinopathy screening: results of an audit in a primary care trust

Systematic screening for diabetic retinopathy is the key to achieving the targets set out in the recently published national service framework (NSF) guidelines. One of the two priorities and planning framework (PPF) targets is that by March 2006 a minimum of 80% of people with diabetes are to be offered screening, rising to 100% by December 2007. Digital photography is the modality for screening. The British Diabetic Association has established standards for any diabetic retinopathy screening programme of at least 80% sensitivity and 95% specificity.

Screening programme

Our screening programme was set up to evaluate the existing nationally recommended diabetic retinopathy screening service.

In all, 2165 patients were invited over a period of 12 months; 909 participated. At the screening mydriatic drops (1% tropicamide and 2.5% phenylephrine) were instilled. The patients were photographed with a Topcon fundus camera and each photograph was screened and graded by consultant ophthalmologists (table 1). Of the total 909, there were 198 patients with retinopathy (grades R1, M, R2, and R3), 644 patients without retinopathy (grade 0), 63 patients with OL (other lesions), and one with T6. The sensitivity was 98% and specificity 97%.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diabetic patients type</th>
<th>Invited</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diabetic patients type 1</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diabetic patients type 2</td>
<td>1442</td>
<td>609</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diabetic patients type not stated</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>259</td>
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Table 2

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<th>Grade</th>
<th>Sex</th>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>261</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>624</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R1</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>54</td>
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<tr>
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<td>M</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R2</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>R3</td>
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<tr>
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</table>

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total patients screened</th>
<th>Sample size</th>
<th>Ungradable</th>
<th>True positives</th>
<th>False negatives</th>
<th>True negatives</th>
<th>False positive</th>
<th>Sensitivity</th>
<th>Specificity</th>
<th>Retinopathy present</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>909</td>
<td>909</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>644</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>21.78%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

but even though quality assurance systems are in place uptake is still very poor.

In the intercollegiate audit, led by the Royal College of Ophthalmologists, data were analysed from 9827 patients with diabetes from 129 general practices in 25 health authorities. The lowest level of coverage in a district was 38% and the highest 85%. In general practice the coverage ranged from 14% to 97%. The likelihood of having an eye examination was marginally higher in districts with a systematic examination rather than opportunistic or without recognised schemes at all.

In the Hounslow Primary Care Trust our hospital episode statistics (HES) are the only existing screening programme. Patients registered with a GP are referred to the HES for the screening. The reasons for the 44% who did not respond were that some did not have the time, some were elderly living on their own with nobody to take them, some did not understand the screening leaflet, and some just forgot.

Problems about coverage could be tackled if we had a central electronic database linked to all screening programmes. Although software providers have been agreed for such a data collection exercise, primary care trusts have yet to implement this. People unable to attend during the week could be accommodated in weekend or evening clinics. These clinics could also be reserved, with bilingual support workers to explain the importance of screening for the ethnic patients. Community networks like the rotary, patient groups, ethnic resource centres, and senior citizens groups can be used. The National Service Framework targets will be achieved only if the diabetic population is convinced of the importance of screening.

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References

Late improvement in upward gaze in a patient with hydrocephalus related Parinaud dorsal midbrain syndrome

Acute hydrocephalus is a common cause of the dorsal midbrain syndrome.1-4 Most patients with this condition improve either immediately following treatment of the hydrocephalus or within a few months, and it is generally assumed that those who do not do so have no potential for subsequent improvement. I recently evaluated a patient whose upward gaze spontaneously improved 4½ years after treatment of trauma related hydrocephalus.

Case report

A 23 year old Asian man was in his usual excellent general and ocular health until October 2000, when he was struck by a car while walking across the street. He was taken to a local hospital where he was found to have extensive injuries, including bilateral subdural and epidural haematomas. He also had evidence of increased intracranial pressure and required an emergency cranial decompression procedure. Postoperatively, he was evaluated by a neuro-ophthalmologist who noted that the patient’s only ocular disturbance was a mild left trochlear nerve paresis. The paresis resolved within about 3 weeks.

About 6 months after the injury, the patient developed severe headaches and double vision. He was evaluated by the same neuro-ophthalmologist who had evaluated him previously. He noted that the patient now had a severe dorsal midbrain syndrome, characterised by lack of elevation of either eye above the midline associated with an exotropia of 25–30 prism dioptres at distance and near, and a left hypertropia of 5 prism dioptres. An evaluation that included neuro-imaging and measurement of intracranial pressure revealed hydrocephalus, and the patient underwent placement of a ventriculoperitoneal shunt with normalisation of intracranial pressure, resolution of neuro-imaging evidence of hydrocephalus, and resolution of headaches but without any change in ocular motility or alignment. He was eventually referred to the neuro-ophthalmology unit of the Wilmer Eye Institute at the Johns Hopkins Hospital for evaluation and management.

The patient was examined by me for the first time in September 2001, 11 months after the original injury and about 5 months after he had first been noted to have a dorsal midbrain syndrome. At that time, the examination revealed visual acuity of 20/20 in both eyes at distance and near. Automated perimetry revealed bilateral, incomplete, congruous, superior homonymous quadrant defects. Pupils were normally reactive to light and near stimulation. In primary position, the patient had a 4 prism dioptre exotropia that increased to 35 prism dioptres on attempted right gaze and decreased to 15 prism dioptres on attempted left gaze. There was also a 5 prism dioptre left hypertropia. Neither eye was able to elevate above the midline, either voluntarily or by the oculocephalic manoeuvre. In May 2002, I performed a left lateral rectus muscle recession of 7.5 mm and a left medial rectus muscle resection of 6.5 mm with superior transposition of both the lateral and medial rectus muscles one muscle width. Postoperatively, the patient had excellent horizontal alignment, although he still had a small left hypertropia of about 5 prism dioptres and was still unable to elevate either eye above the midline.

1 I subsequently followed the patient at regular intervals. When I examined him in April 2004, he had no change in his ocular motility or alignment, and I recommended that he consider obtaining a small vertical prism to try to eliminate his residual vertical diplopia. I also recommended that he return in 1 year for reassessment. He did so in August 2005.

When I examined the patient in August 2005, he indicated that he thought his vision had improved. He stated that although he was aware of some double vision, it was somewhat less than it had been previously. He also thought his eyes were “moving better.”

On examination, the patient’s visual acuity with correction was 20/15 in each eye at distance and J1 in each eye at near. Colour vision testing using Hardy-Rand-Rittler pseudoisochromatic plates was 10/10 bilaterally. Visual fields were performed by static technique and showed stable bilateral, incomplete, congruous, superior homonymous quadranetic defects, consistent with damage to both inferior occipital lobes. Pupils were isocoric and normally reactive to light and near stimulation. The patient had full abduction, adduction, and infrafusion of both eyes. In addition, he now was able to elevate both eyes about 35° above the midline. He had normal velocity saccades in all directions, but he developed convergence-retraction nystagmus when looking at an optokinetic drum whose targets were being rotated downward. When the targets were moving upward, to the right, or to the left, the response was normal. In August 2005, the patient had a 4 prism dioptre intermittent left hypertropia at distance and near, associated with 4° of intorsion of the left eye using double Maddox rods. He was most comfortable with a 4 prism dioptre prism placed base up over the left spectacle lens, and a Fresnel prism of this strength and orientation was placed on the left lens of his glasses. He had no ptosis or lid retraction, and the results of slit lamp biomicroscopy, applanation tonometry, and ophthalmoscopy were normal.

Comment

The dorsal midbrain syndrome of Parinaud usually results from damage to premotor pathways for binocular upward gaze in the dorsal mesencephalon.2 Depending on the extent of ophthalmic surgery, patients may have pursuit saccadic dissociation, with better upward gaze during pursuit than when attempting upward saccades, and some patients have improved upward gaze with the oculocephalic manoeuvre, indicating sparing of infranuclear pathways. The dorsal midbrain syndrome may be caused by extrinsic or intrinsic lesions, with hydrocephalus being a common aetiology in some series.3,4 Depending on the nature and extent of damage as well as the length of time the condition has been present before the underlying disorder is treated, some patients improve, often substantially, whereas others do not. In general, patients whose underlying condition is treated successfully but who do not improve for several years are thought to have no potential to improve; however, our patient’s spontaneous improvement about 4½ years after onset and treatment of the underlying condition indicates that some patients retain the potential to improve even after several years have passed. This information may be of value in counselling patients with the dorsal midbrain syndrome who ask if there is any chance of improvement when none has occurred after months to a few years.

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References


Purification of triamcinolone acetonide suspension for intravitreal injection

In the article by García-Arumí and associates,1 the authors reported the results of several techniques used for purification of triamcinolone acetonide suspension for intravitreal injection (two filter and two non-filter techniques). I very much appreciate that they fully described by the authors. Are they previously published techniques? Are they techniques clearly specified by the authors. Are they previously published techniques? Are they techniques developed entirely by García-Arumí et al? As far as I know, the centrifugation technique described by García-Arumí et al. was first reported by Hernández-Ortega in 2003 and it was first published by Hernández-Ortega and myself in the 2004 July/August issue of the journal. The term “purification” was first applied to the removal of most of the vehicle from a commercially available triamcinolone acetonide suspension by us. Non-parametric tests tend to be more powerful than non-parametric tests if their distributional assumptions are met. However, non-parametric methods require fewer
assumptions, and they are generally robust against problems like outliers and non-con-
stant variances. The authors tested statistical significance by the Kruskal-Wallis test, a non-
parametric procedure that is a K-sample generalisation of the two sample rank sum test (also called the Mann-Whitney U test). It tests the null hypothesis of identical group medians, rather than means. With the data available in this report, the authors should have noticed that figures 1 and 2 show means and standard deviations; they should instead have shown group medians. Moreover, their results should have been expressed as med-
ians. It also remains unclear how many assays were performed. By looking at figures 1 and 2, it seems that three assays were done each time but somehow they were done in duplicate. This is important to show the real sample size that was used to compute the estimates.

The pellet resuspension with 0.9 ml of BSS in the centrifugation technique appeared in their final recommendation at the end of the paper. However, the authors stated in the methods section that the pellet was resus-
pended with 1 ml of BSS. This point needs to be explained.

1. recommend that the authors clarify the above mentioned issues. I also suggest that they learn the golden rule of fair use of other properties meeting ideal requirements,

PHEMA as a keratoprosthesis material
An aim to provide an optimised keratoprosth-
esis, with excellent biointegration, and all other properties meeting ideal requirements, is one we share with Mehta et al. However, their report leaves out some points that require clarification.

PHEMA (poly(2-hydroxyethyl methacry-
late) is a non-toxic polymer of the toxic monomer HEMA, though cytotoxicity is still present by immunohistochemistry. The authors obtained for their study was not fully described, and may have been contact lens blanks, unlikely to have been processed for “implantable quality.” Whether the samples had been fully extracted was not stated, nor was the hydration of the samples when used for the study. Contact lens blanks are not designed for cell adhesion and the results of this study, with regard to PHEMA, are entirely predict-
able and have been previously reported.

The commercially available keratoprosth-
esis AlphaCor is made from a form of PHEMA, specifically modified for its intended purpose within the cornea. In particular, the AlphaCor OPTIC is made from a relatively low water content, but hydrated, micropor-
ous form, similar to the samples evaluated by the authors, specifically because it does not encourage cellular adhesion (epithelial cover-
age is not desired for this model, nor would adherent posterior cells and membranes be desirable).

In contradistinction, the biointegratable SKIRT region of AlphaCor is made from a macroporous form of PHEMA with a very high water content; this material, with its interconnecting channels, has been optimised to promote viable biocolonisation, which has been extensively described in the literature. Mehta et al do concede that cells “may behave differently in colonising a 3-D porous kera-
toprosthetic skirt”; indeed they do. Further, very subtle modifications of the sponge structure significantly affect all aspects of biointegration.

Both early trial results, such as the preliminary cases cited by Mehta et al, and current results for over 250 AlphaCor devices, have been extensively presented and made available to all device users. Histology now available from AlphaCor devices explanted from human recipients confirms that the biointegration process in humans is similar to that previously shown in the animal model, and maintained in the long term. As expected, specific inflammatory processes can cause localised reversal of biointe-
gration in areas of stromal melting. Certainly, porosity itself does not prevent melting processes, as is also seen in relation to hydroxyapatite keratoprostheses and orbi-

tal implants.

There is no argument that keratoprosthesis materials and designs require ongoing revision and improvement. The authors’ findings in relation to hydroxyapatite are interesting although, as they note, this rigid material has its own limitations. Novel approaches are undergoing early evaluation and may offer benefits. However, at present, in our view, AlphaCor is a device worthy of con-
sideration for those in whom a donor graft would fail.

Expression of TSH-R in normal human extraocular muscles
We read with interest the paper published by Boschi et al, in which immunohistochemistry was performed on orbital tissue from patients with thyroid associated ophthalmopo-
athy (TAO) and compared with non-dis-
cased orbital tissue.

Our laboratory recently reported positive TSH receptor staining within normal human muscle fibres, using one of the same anti-
bodies (3G4) as Boschi et al (supplied by Costagliola) and a commercial antibody (3B12).

Our findings differ from Boschi et al’s as no staining of the muscle fibres was visible in their experience.

Assessing the techniques used suggested some possibilities as to why our findings differ. Our paraffin embedded tissues were subjected to a proteolytic antigen retrieval step, as commonly used in avidin-biotin staining. The reason for this is that formalin fixed in fixation is notorious for altering protein immunoreactivity, and hence masking protein expression. Moreover, the amplification immunohisto-

chemistry kit used in our experiments is possibly more sensitive than conventional immunohistochemistry used in the experi-

ments of Boschi et al.

We do not dispute the finding that TSH-R expression is elevated in orbital connective tissue of diseased patients. Combined with our findings, Boschi et al’s paper also suggests that expression of TSH-R on normal muscle fibres is lower than in the connective tissue of diseased patients. Boschi et al have successfully produced more evidence that connective tissues in the orbit are active in TAO affected patients; however, the potential role of the extraocular muscle in the pathogenesis of TAO should also be considered.

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References

Trabeculotomy versus trabeculotomy-trabeculectomy for congenital glaucoma

The article by Al-Hazmi et al states that combined trabeculotomy-trabeculectomy with mitomycin C (CTTM) gave better results than trabeculotomy alone for primary congenital glaucoma (PCG) at the King Khaled Eye Specialist Hospital (KKESH) in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, between 1982 and 2002. For moderate PCG the success rate was stated as 40% and 80% for trabeculotomy and CTTM, respectively. For severe PCG the stated success rate is 10% and 70% for trabeculotomy and CTTM, respectively. However, without more specific information regarding when the trabeculotomies were performed at KKESH, the authors cannot advocate CTTM over trabeculotomy for moderate and severe PCG.

As the article states, over the years at KKESH the success rate for trabeculotomy for PCG dramatically improved (29% from 1982–90; 47% from 1991–4; 82% from 1995–2002). The authors attribute these improved results over the years to improved primary health-care facilities within the kingdom, earlier referrals, better equipment availability, and surgeons becoming more adept at surgical intervention. In contrast, CTTM for PCG was first performed at KKESH in 1994 with less of a “learning curve”; the success rate from 1994–2002 was 72%. The complication rate, however, was higher for CTTM than for trabeculotomy.

Because initial trabeculotomy success for PCG at KKESH has dramatically increased with time, it is important to know how many trabeculotomies were not in the paper. It may be that trabeculotomy as currently performed at KKESH for moderate and severe PCG has a success rate similar to that of CTTM for the same patient population with fewer surgical complications.

Reference

Corrected author’s name has been misspelt. The correct list of authors is, D A Sami, D Saunders, D A Thompson, I M Russell-Eggitt, K K Nischal, G Jeffrey, M Dattani, R A Clement, A Liasis, D S Taylor. The journal apologises for this error.

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In the letter titled, Bevacizumab suppresses choroidal neovascularisation caused by pathological myopia (Br J Ophthalmol 2005;10:1368-87), it was previously published online at http://bjo.bmjjournals.com/cgi/content/full/89/6/e1.

doi: 10.1136/bjo.2005.66431corr1

In the title, Chondroblastoma of the maxillary sinus: a rare cause of sinus obstruction (Br J Ophthalmol 2005;89:845–53), the authors have been listed incorrectly. The correct list of authors is, J A Hainsworth, D J T Datoo, C R Mill, R A McWhinney, J E Maclean, R A Clement. The journal apologises for this error.

doi: 10.1136/bjo.2005.75184corr1

In the letter titled, Two novel mutations of connexin genes in Chinese families with autosomal dominant congenital nuclear cataract (Br J Ophthalmol 2005;89:1533-6), the authors have been listed incorrectly. The correct list is, Z W Ma, J Q Zheng, J Li, X R Li, X Tang, X Y Yuan, X M Zhang, H M Sun.

doi: 10.1136/bjo.2005.82453corr1

In the mailbox item titled, TTT: local light absorption and heat convection versus heat (Br J Ophthalmol 2005;11:1544-5), the second author’s name has been misspelt. The correct spelling is D H Sliley. The journal apologises for this error.

doi: 10.1136/bjo.2005.74468corr1

In the letter titled, Confocal microscopy of the cornea in nephropathic cystinosis (Br J Ophthalmol 2005;89:1530-1), the order of the authors is incorrect. The correct order is A H Alshubaihani, A O Kahn, M D Wagoner. The journal apologises for this error.

doi: 10.1136/bjo.2005.74468corr1