

UNILATERAL RETINITIS PIGMENTOSA*

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Case Report

A male aged 42 years had noticed gradual diminution of vision in the right eye for the last 5 years, especially in the evening and at night. He had noticed the difficulty especially when shooting at dusk.

Family History.—The patient had three brothers and two sisters, all with no ocular complaints. His parents had no history of night blindness.

Examination.—In the right eye the anterior segment, lens, vitreous, and tension were all normal. The visual acuity was 6/6 with 0.25 D cyl., axis 90°. The visual field was reduced to tubular form. The optic disc was waxy in colour with well-defined margins and marked attenuation of the blood vessels. Bony corpuscular pigmentation was present all round, being more marked in upper and outer quadrant, and at places surrounding the retinal blood vessels.

The left eye was quite normal in all respects. The Wassermann reaction and Kahn test were negative, and all systems of the body were normal.

Discussion

Pedraglia (1865) was the first to report an indisputable case of unilateral retinitis pigmentosa. Dreisler (1948) suggested that the condition represents a rare form of geotypical asymmetry. Joseph (1951) concluded that most cases showing the fundus picture of retinitis pigmentosa unilaterally lacked the other features of the condition. Aberastain (1954) ascribed these extremely rare cases to the partial, asymmetrical manifestation of a recessive gene in a heterozygous individual. Turtz (1956) described a further case, and Landolt (1959) described two cases, one of which showed typical retinitis pigmentosa in one eye and typical diabetic retinopathy in the other, the involvement of the retinal vascular tree by retinitis pigmentosa having apparently inhibited the diabetic lesions.

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