Treascher Collins syndrome with novel ophthalmic findings and visceral anomalies

Treascher Collins syndrome (TCS) (mandibulofacial dysostosis (MFD) or zygopoomandibular dysplasia) is one of a group of congenital malformation syndromes that have in common maldevelopment of the first and second branchial arches. Clinical features typically include hypoplasia of the mandible and zygoma; a complex variety of ear abnormalities including malformed pinnae, atresia of the external auditory canals and anomalies of the middle ear ossicles; cleft palate; receding chin; and sinus and choanal atresia. We present a pair of twins that possessed not only classic features of TCS but also unusual visceral and previously unreported ophthalmic pathology.

Casereports

A 32 year old, gravida 3 para 2-0-0-2 woman underwent elective abortion after fetal death and major fetal malformations were diagnosed during pregnancy: Ultrasound examination at 20 weeks of gestation displayed monozygotic, diamniotic twins. Twin A, noted alive at 16 weeks, was dead and surrounded by minimal amniotic fluid. Fetus B was alive with several anomalies including bilateral infraorbital cystic masses, protruding tongue, and large median facial cleft. Amniocentesis revealed a 46XY karyotype without numerical or structural chromosomal abnormalities. The parents denied any significant medical history, family history, of congenital anomalies, or use of drugs or alcohol. Their two other children, ages 17 and 33 months, were normal. No family members exhibited features of TCS on visual examination.

Necropsy measurements were consistent with 16 weeks of gestational age for twin A and 21 weeks for twin B. Both twins had bilaterally hypoplastic zygomas, maxillae, and related muscles; severely hypoplastic and misplaced pineal; bilaterally agenic external auditory canals; bilateral facial clefts, and severe micrognathia (Fig 1). Twin A exhibited left sided choanal atresia, agenesis of the hard and soft palate, and multiple visceral anomalies, including a cleft lip and palate; absence of middle ears; bilateral renal agenesis; rudimentary urinary bladder, and absent epididymes. Twin B was noted to have right sided choanal atresia, soft palate aplasia, hard palate hypoplasia, and a left sided cleft; twin B had no visceral anomalies. Ocular pathologic dissection of twin A illustrated bilateral microphthalmia; corneal scerlaisation; and maldevelopment of the uvea, lens, and retina. Ocular dissection of twin B revealed microphthalmia, aniridia, congenital cataracts, and bilateral vacularisation of the corneas.

Comment

These twins had multiple features characteristic of TCS, most notably hypoplastic zygomas, maxillae, and related muscles—perhaps the most characteristic features of TCS. In contrast, visceral anomalies, such as those of twin A, are rare. Only two cases have been previously reported: one with tracheoschaphal fistula, rectovaginal fistula, and anal atresia; another with achatias. Renal agenesis, found in twin A, has not been previously described in association with TCS. While ophthalmological features in TCS are often extensive, they seldom involve the intracorneal structures. Common findings include a defective inferior lateral angle of the orbit, caudal displacement of the superolateral orbit, true and pseudocolobomas of the lids, lateral canthal dystopia, orbital lipodermoids, cononisceral dermoids, and microphthalmos. Cata- racts, lacrimal duct atresia, pupillary ectopia, distichiasis, and uveal colobomas have been reported less commonly. Intracorneal involvement in these twins is rare in TCS. Furthermore, aniridia, corneal scerlaisation, and uvea, lens, and retinal maldevelopment are previously unreported.

TCS is an autosomal dominant disorder affecting one in 50,000 live births. The disorder appears to have arisen in these twins with no relevant family history, as occurs in 60% of cases. Expressivity is highly variable, ranging from clinical features to perinatal death secondary to airway compromise; the disease severity that resulted in the fetal death of twin A is highly unusual. The responsible gene, TCOF1, has been mapped to 5q32–33.2 and the structure of its protein, treacle, elucidated. To date, 51 disease causing mutations have been identified, nearly all resulting in a premature termination codon. Significantly, no relation has been found between any single mutation and phenotype severity. The ophthalmic pathology observed in these twins may have resulted from a focal TCOF1 mutation and a yet to be defined role treacle may have in eye (and renal) development. Considering the number and severity of abnormalities, the failure to identify a single “genetic hot spot,” and the novel ophthalmic features, an alternative and perhaps more likely explanation is that a second gene, itself involved in ophthal- mic embryology, was affected along with TCOF1. This unidentified gene may have been disrupted from a translocation involving 5q32–33.2 or from a de novo large enough perinatal mutation.

A final consideration is that these twins may not have had TCS but rather a new though closely related syndrome. Further genetic investiga- tion may shed light upon these speculations.

Acknowledgements

JLP and GB contributed equally to this work.

J L Prenner, G Beninbaum, D F Carpentieri, S M Goldstein, R S Douglas, E Ruchelli, J A Katowitz
Scheie Eye Institute, Department of Ophthalmology, University of Pennsylvania; Departments of Pediatric Ophthalmology and Pathology, Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA
R W Hertle
The Laboratory of Sensorimotor Research, The National Eye Institute, The National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, Maryland, USA

Correspondence to: J L Prenner, MD, Department of Ophthalmology, Scheie Eye Institute, University of Pennsylvania, 51 North 39th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106, USA; jlprenner@excite.com

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References


Acute postural drop in optic nerve perfusion after vitrectomy and gas in a patient with diabetic autonomic neuropathy

We report the case of an insulin dependent diabetic who suffered transient blindness as a result of a change of posture following vitrectomy surgery with injection of gas.

This 34 year old woman with longstanding diabetic disease, postural hypotension, and proliferative retinopathy had undergone argon laser panretinal photocoagulation (PRP) to both eyes. Her right eye was amblyopic and had visual acuity of counting fingers (CF), whereas the left eye, at best, had vision of 6/12 that was frequently impaired by recurrent vitreous haemorrhage. She underwent left vitrectomy and required 30% sulphur hexafluoride (SF6) gas to support an incidentally noted full thickness macular hole following injection of gas.

Comment

Judging by the severity of the visual loss we believe that it was due to obstruction of both the central retinal artery and optic nerve perfusion. The precipitating factor in this case would appear to have been the change in posture from supine to erect. The presence of gas in the operated eye had raised the intraocular pressure to a level such that the perfusion pressure to the eye was effectively eliminated resulting in a period of no light perception. Restoring the patient to the supine position was sufficient alone to reverse the condition and improve the perfusion of the eye. When the IOP was reduced to normal she was out of this critical situation and was able to maintain the ocular perfusion, even when sitting.

Collapse of the central retinal artery is known to occur in conditions of high IOP but vision does not fluctuate with posture. However, it is known that raised IOP also reduces orthograde axonal transport and compromises nerve head perfusion.

Postural hypotension is diabetic is secondary to autonomic neuropathy. The physiology is not clear but it seems the main factor is blunted catecholamine response to standing and failure of the lower limb vascular resistance to increase adequately.

Systemic hypotension can cause dramatic optic nerve flow blood as illustrated by numerous reports in the literature of non-arteritic anterior ischaemic optic neuropathy (NA-AION) occurring following acute blood loss. Patients with NA-AION have a significantly greater postural pressure change in IOP compared with healthy subjects as shown by James and Smith.

In the same study they demonstrated a higher pulsatile ocular blood flow (POBF) on standing compared with supine. In this patient with autonomic neuropathy it is likely that the normal increase in POBF on standing was inadequate.

We advise particular caution in diabetics undergoing ocular surgery in which there may be a significant postoperative pressure rise. Similar problems can occur during surgery if hypotensive anaesthesia is either deliberately or inadvertently employed in diabetics. Beware of assuming postoperative vision to be purely the result of the presence of haemorrhage or gas; patients may have quite poor vision immediately after vitreoretinal surgery but will rarely have NPL unless there is also optic nerve compromise. We also suggest one should aim for a lower post-operative IOP in diabetics.

A Al Khair, J C Khan, R L Burton
Department of Ophthalmology, The West Norfolk Hospital, Bawthorpe Road, Norwich NR2 3TQ, UK

Correspondence to: Mr Burton; ted.burton@norfolk.norwich.nhs.uk

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References


Optical coherence tomography imaging of severe commotio retinae and associated macular hole

Commotio retinae results in retinal opacification following blunt trauma. Mild commotio retinae usually settles spontaneously with minimal sequelae but more severe cases are associated with visual loss. We are not aware of any previous reports describing optical coherence tomography (OCT) imaging of severe commotio retinae with an associated full thickness macular hole (FTMH).

Case report

A 15 year old boy presented 24 hours after blunt trauma to a football striking his right eye. On examination his best corrected visual acuity was counting fingers right eye and 6/6 left. Biomicroscopic examination revealed extensive commotio retinae over the posterior pole, no posterior vitreous detachment (PVD), and a FTMH. Colour photography and OCT imaging (OCT 2000 scanner, Zeiss-Humphrey) were performed (Fig 1). OCT confirms a FTMH and demonstrates extensive disruption of photoreceptor outer segments and retinal pigment epithelium (RPE).

Figure 1 (A) Right macula of 15 year old boy with extensive commotio retinae over posterior pole and an associated macular hole at 1 day after blunt injury. (B) Horizontal OCT scan through centre of macula confirms a full thickness macular hole and demonstrates extensive disruption of photoreceptor outer segment/retinal pigment epithelium layer. The optic disc is seen at the nasal edge of the scan.

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He was treated conservatively with a short course of topical steroids. The colour fundus and OCT appearance at 1 month are shown in Figure 2. Despite spontaneous macular hole closure, visual acuity remained at counting fingers at 1 year follow up.

Comment
The major site of retinal trauma appeared on OCT to be at the level of the photoreceptor outer segment/RPE interface. The OCT images are consistent with fragmentation of photoreceptor outer segments and damaged cell bodies, as suggested by Sipperley et al in their study of the histological changes in commotio retinae in primates.

The exact pathogenesis of macular holes remains uncertain. Ho et al outlined the three basic historical theories regarding aetiology—the traumatic theory, the cystic degeneration and vascular theory, and the vitreous theory. Of these, the latter has gathered the most support in the context of idiopathic macular holes.

In our case, the OCT imaging reveals that the edges of the macular hole are elliptical and irregular with no associated PVD, cortical vitreous condensation, or overlying prefoveal opacity. The characteristics suggest a different mechanism of hole formation from that proposed in idiopathic senile macular holes. We believe that mechanical distortion of the retina, relative to the vitreous and underlying sclera, created disruption of the photoreceptor outer segments and creation of a FTMH in this case. It is at the fovea and photoreceptor outer segment level that the retina has the least support from Müller cells and is therefore likely to undergo greatest deformation.

In the only previous report of OCT imaging in traumatic macular hole, a case with mild commotio retinae was described in which extensive outer retinal disruption was not observed.3 There have been some encouraging reports suggesting that vitrectomy can successfully close traumatic macular holes as well as improve visual function in many cases.1,4 However, it seems unlikely that cases with severe commotio retinae, and associated photoreceptor/RPE damage, as demonstrated in our cases, would gain any benefit from surgical as opposed to spontaneous closure of a traumatic FTMH. The final visual prognosis is severely limited by the extent of initial photoreceptor damage, and the excessive pigment atrophy and clumping that follows. We believe OCT imaging provides additional information both on the pathogenesis of commotio retinae and in the assessment of outer retina disruption following ocular trauma. This information may help in the selection of patients likely to benefit from surgical intervention.

R Ismail, V Tanner
Royal Berkshire Hospital, London Road, Reading, RG1 2AN, UK
T H Williamson
St Thomas’s Hospital, Lambeth Palace Road, London SE1 7EH, UK
Correspondence to: Mr V Tanner; tannerone@oal.com

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References

Acute ocular ischaemia and orbital inflammation associated with systemic lupus erythematosus

We report a patient with systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE) who developed bilateral ocular ischaemic syndrome in association with orbital inflammation leading to devastating visual loss.

Case report
A 73 year old white woman presented with unilateral acute anterior uveitis and polyarthritis of the hands, knees, and neck. Over the next 4 years she suffered recurrent anterior uveitis, marginal keratitis, and episcleritis, which were treated with topical steroids. She had bilateral age related cataract and underwent left cataract surgery. Postoperatively, her visual acuities were 6/60 right eye and 6/9 left eye.

She was admitted 7 months later with extensive retinal haemorrhages, scaly plaques on sun exposed areas and a purpuric eruption over the abdomen, buttocks, and legs. Biopsy of a plaque showed changes consistent with SLE including follicular keratin plugging, epidermal atrophy, degeneration of the basal layer with collagen body formation, basement membrane thickening, myxoid change in the dermis, and periappendageal lymphocyte infiltration. Biopsy of the purpuric eruption was consistent with a leucocytoclastic vasculitis. Further investigations revealed positive rheumatoid factor (1/100), ANA (1/25), p-ANCA (1/100), and anti-EN antibodies (1/100). There was reduced C3 and C4, polyclonal hypergammaglobulinaemia (1/100), and anti-EN antibodies (1/100).

She was treated with topical dexamethasone 0.1% and corticosteroid 1% oral acetazolamide 500 mg daily, intravenous cyclophosphamide (10 mg/kg), and subsequently intravenous immunoglobulin (0.5 g/kg/day for 5 days). Over the following month there was regression of the proptosis, conjunctival and lid oedema, corneal oedema, and fibrinous uveitis. The intraocular pressure was controlled and the visual acuity remained perception of light in each eye. Subsequently, the patient developed pneumonia, VIIth nerve palsy, left sided hemiparesis, and died 7 weeks after admission. Postmortem examination revealed bronchopneumonia, lung abscesses, pleural effusions, fibrinous pericarditis, cardio-megaly, and jejunal mucosal haemorrhages.

Figure 1 Anterior segment of right eye showing conjunctival injection, corneal oedema, hyphaema, rubecosis iridis, and cataract.

Figure 2 B-scan ultrasound of left eye showing marked posterior scleritis (cross) and choroidal detachament (arrow).
The family did not consent to histopathologi-

cal examination of the eyes.

Comment

Acute orbital inflammation and orbital myosi-
tis leading to proptosis are rare manifestations of
SLE.15 To our knowledge acute ocular ischaemic syndrome with orbital inflamma-
tion is a novel complication of SLE. The ophthalmic manifestations may have resulted from a vasculitis involving the vessels supplying
the globe and extracocular muscles. The limitation of ocular movements was most probably the result of mechanical restriction. Although the proptosis, lid and conjunctival oedema improved with immuno-suppression, the visual acuity did not recover. This may have been because of irreversible visual loss from optic nerve dysfunction due to ischaemia, compression from the acute orbital inflamma-
tion, or secondary to raised intraocular pressure. Close cooperation between ophthalmologist and rheumatologist is essen-
tial in the management of these patients, in order to try and prevent blindness.

P Stavrou, P I Murray
Birmingham and Midland Eye Centre, City Hospital NHS Trust, Birmingham, UK
K Batta
Birmingham Skin Centre, City Hospital NHS Trust, Birmingham, UK
C Gordon
Department of Rheumatology, City Hospital NHS Trust, Birmingham, UK

Correspondence to: Professor P I Murray, Academic Unit of Ophthalmology, Division of Immunity and Infection, Birmingham and Midland Eye Centre, City Hospital NHS Trust, Birmingham B18 7QU, UK; P.I.Murray@bham.ac.uk

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References


Chickenpox neuroretinitis in a 9 year old child

Chickenpox in children is usually thought of as a benign infectious disease with few ocular complications. Posterior segment involvement from primary varicella zoster infection has rarely been reported in children. We describe the clinical features and visual outcome of an unusual case of neuroretinitis presenting in a 9 year old child.

Case report

An immunocompetent 9 year old boy acquired primary varicella zoster virus (VZV) infection from his sibling and developed the characteristic exanthematous vesicular rash. Four days after the onset of the rash he woke with discomfort in his right eye and described his vision as being "all grey" on that side. He pre-

sented to the emergency department the same day and was found to have a visual acuity of 3/6 on the right and 3/3 on the left (log-
M AR). A relative afferent pupillary defect (RAPD) was present on the right. His anterior segment was quiet with no vitritis; however, he had slight macular thickening and a subtle cherry red spot on funduscop, along with some mild peripapillary swelling and disc haemorrhage.

On review in the ophthalmology clinic 2 days later his vision had reduced to 1/60 (Sheridan Gardiner singles) on the right. He had no new skin lesions and all those present had crusted. No lid lesions were present. He had a marked RAPD, red desaturation, and mild conjunctival injection. His anterior seg-
mament and vitreous remained clear. The right disc was hyperaemic with peripapillary swell-
ning and haemorrhage. The macular area was pale and oedematous (Fig 1). Examination of the left eye was completely normal.

Considering the onset of ocular symptoms and signs following the appearance of the typical VZV skin lesions, a presumptive diagnosis of chickenpox neuroretinitis was made. He was admitted and commenced on intravenous aciclovir (250 mg × 3 per day). Confirmatory IgM titres for VZV were unfor-
tunately not performed. No change in his acuity was observed over the next few days; however, his right disc was noted to become slightly pale after 2 days of treatment. At this point intravenous methyl prednisolone was instituted at a dose of 5 mg/kg per day. Despite a gradual resolution of the macular and peri-
papillary oedema over the next 5 days, his disc remained pale (Fig 2) and his acuity measured as 3/30 (logMAR) after 7 days of intravenous aciclovir and 5 days of methyl prednisolone. Systematically he remained com-
pletely well and afebrile on treatment. He was discharged with a further 3 day course of oral aciclovir and a 6 day reducing course of oral prednisolone.

Over 5 months of follow up his acuity has not improved beyond 3/30 (logMAR). The right optic disc is pale and a yellow lipid deposit is present at the macula with some reticular macular pigmentation. The left eye has been normal throughout.

Comment

Posterior segment involvement as part of pri-
mary VZV infection in children has only been reported twice1,6 to our knowledge. Copenhagen1 reported a 3 year old with bilateral papillitis and a unilateral macular lesion associated with encephalitis following VZV infection. This occurred after complete recovery of vision and resolution of the macu-
lar lesion within 3 weeks of presentation. Capone and Meredith1 describe a case of unilat-
eral central visual loss in a 2 year old child caused by chickenpox retinitis resulting in a poor visual outcome. Their patient presented with an acute exo-
tropia 24–48 hours before the onset of cutaneous VZV. Funduscopy revealed papillitis, phlebitis, and a macular lipd star; retinal opacification just outside the arcades and scattered intraretinal haemorrhages were also described. In these two cases sequential acuity measurement or photography were not possible because of the young age of the subjects.

Our case is particularly interesting, not only because these are the first published fundal photographs of VZV neuroretinitis in a child, but also because of the relatively mild ocular findings which have resulted in permanent visual loss. The young age of the patient is atypical of ocular VZV infection. Adults who contract primary VZV infection tend to run a more severe course than children.3 Ocular complic-
tions in children are extremely rare.3

The typical posterior segment involvement of VZV is acute retinal necrosis (ARN).4 The youngest case of ARN in association with chickenpox has been reported in a 4 year old.5 In adults, ARN is described as being less severe when presenting at the time of primary zoster infection than as a result of secondary reactivation of latent, previously acquired VZV.6 The changes typical of ARN were absent in this case. Unilateral papillitis and retinitis confined to the macular area were the main features. Optic neuritis has been reported by several authors in association with primary VZV.7,8 Many of these cases are bilateral and coincident with encephalitis or occurring in those who are immunocompromised.4 Unilat-
eral optic neuritis has been described in an 18 year old several weeks following a varicella rash which remitted without sequelae follow-
ing the administration of corticosteroid.9

The mainstay of treatment of VZV retinitis is with intravenous aciclovir. Whether any advantage is gained in administering systemic steroid with the aciclovir is controversial.10 We do not know if a more positive visual outcome may have been achieved if intravenous therapy had been commenced on presenta-
tion. It is therefore suggested that prompt treatment of VZV retinitis with intravenous aciclovir be started in patients, particularly in a child, presenting with any posterior seg-
ment signs.

J R MacKinnon, T Lim Joon, J E Elder
Department of Ophthalmology, Royal Children’s Hospital, Melbourne, Australia

Figure 1 Right fundus: neuroretinitis with loss of vision to 1/60.

Figure 2 Right fundus: following treatment with intravenous aciclovir and methyl prednisolone.

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Bilateral central retinal artery occlusion in Wegener’s granulomatosis and α1-proteinase deficiency

Visual loss occurs in up to 8% of patients with Wegener’s granulomatosis (WG) during the disease lifetime, although only a small proportion of these cases are the result of central retinal artery occlusion (CRAO). We describe an unusual case of a patient with bilateral CRAO as a presenting feature of WG and α1-proteinase (AAT) deficiency.

Case report

A 58-year-old white man presented with sudden painless loss of vision to the right eye. Vision was hand movements in the right eye and 6/6 in the left. Funduscopy revealed an acute right CRAO with macular oedema. There were no signs of uveitis or retinal vasculitis. Management consisted of intravenous acetylsalicylic acid (300 mg), oral mesa-sage, and anterior chamber paracentesis. He was subsequently sent home with aspirin treatment, and referred to his family doctor for routine risk factors assessment.

The following morning, he returned to the eye casualty department with a left CRAO, which was treated in the same way. Vision was 6/60 in the right eye and hand movements in the left. Systemic inquiry revealed a 2 month history of general malaise, arthralgia, and myalgia. General examination revealed evidence of vasculitic rash (Fig 1) affecting the right elbow and nailfold infarcts (Fig 2). He was admitted for further investigation. His erythrocyte sedimentation rate in the first hour of 128 mm was markedly raised. Liver enzymes were slightly abnormal (γGT, 165 IU/L, ALT, 85, alkaline phosphatase, 153). There were traces of blood and protein in the urine, with a normal creatinine clearance (86 mmol/l).

He was commenced on oral prednisolone (60 mg/day) for presumed systemic vasculitis. Normal echocardiography and blood cultures excluded endocarditis. Ultrasound of his orbit may be the site of primary inflammation. Deficiency of AAT results in progressive emphysema and liver injury. However, there is no evidence of any reports implicating AAT deficiency in CRAO, although it is possible that this is contributing to the ongoing inflammatory process underlying his vasculitis.

Figure 1 Photograph of right elbow showing vasculitic rash.

Figure 2 Retrolitofluor photograph of right and left index fingers showing nailfold infarcts.

Complication of acupuncture in a patient with Behçet’s disease

We would like to bring to your attention a complication resulting from acupuncture in a patient with Behçet’s disease.

Case report

A 35-year-old white man, who fulfilled the International Study Group criteria for Behçet’s disease, attended the Behçet’s clinic at the Birmingham and Midland Eye Centre. He complained of four red areas on his left arm (Fig 1). Two days earlier he had undergone acupuncture for what he described as “tennis elbow.” These red areas corresponded to the acupuncture needles that had been inserted. Examination revealed these areas to be pustules (inset) that were characteristic of Behçet’s disease.

Figure 1 Arrows indicating pustules corresponding to a positive pathergy test. Insert: magnified image of one pustule.
Comment
A positive pathergy test is an important diagnostic sign of Behçet’s disease. Its prevalence varies by geographic region, being less common in patients from Northern Europe. Nevertheless, patients with Behçet’s disease should be made aware of this potential complication if they intend to undergo acupuncture.

P I Murray, N Aboteen
Birmingham and Midland Eye Centre, Birmingham B18 7QU, UK

Correspondence to: Professor P I Murray, Academic Unit of Ophthalmology, Division of Immunity and Infection, Birmingham and Midland Eye Centre, City Hospital NHS Trust, Dudley Road, Birmingham B18 7QU, UK, P.I.Murray@bham.ac.uk

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Reference


Corneoscleral fibrous histiocytoma
Fibrous histiocytomas of the corneoscleral limbus are rare tumours. We present a case report and a review of the clinical and histopathological findings from cases presented in the literature.

Case report
A 19 year old white male presented with a 6 month history of a painless growth on the inferior corneoscleral limbus of the left eye (Fig 1A and B). There were no other ocular symptoms. He had no medical history of note. His vision was 6/5 unaided in the right eye, and 6/6 unaided in the left eye. The growth was approximately 5 mm in diameter, vascularised, and yellowish in appearance. There were no other ocular abnormalities. The lesion was excised by conjunctival excision and sent for histopathological opinion and sent for histopathological opinion.

Histological sections of the lesion showed a stromal hypercellular nodule consisting of spindle cells, small lymphocytes, multinucleated giant cells, and histiocytes. (Fig 1C–F). Some histiocytes had foamy cytoplasm. Many capillary sized blood vessels were present. In areas, the spindle cells were arranged in a storiform pattern. A fine collagenous meshwork extended throughout the lesion. Immunohistochemistry confirmed the cellular composition of the lesion (Fig 1G, H) as rich in inflammatory cells, including foam cells and siderophages. No atypical nuclei or mitotic figures are present. Although some authors regard these tumours as reactive proliferations of fibroblasts, others do not accept this view because the lesions tend not to regress spontaneously. Recurrence is rare, with less than 5% of cutaneous benign fibrous histiocytomas recurring after local excision.

In contrast, malignant fibrous histiocytomas of the corneoscleral limbus characteristically appear in later life, between the ages of 50–70 years, with an equal distribution of males to females. They are highly aggressive tumours, and have been reported to have a local recurrence rate of 100% if a limited excision is performed. Recurrence can occur within a few months of excision. There are seven reported cases of corneoscleral malignant fibrous histiocytoma. Two of the cases had an enucleation and two cases underwent orbital exenteration.

Figure 1  Fibrous histiocytoma arising from the corneoscleral limbus, showing the tumour extending into the cornea. It is moderately vascular and has a similar appearance to a dermoid. (B) Fibrous histiocytoma showing the inferior margin of the tumour. (C) Haematoxylin and eosin (H&E) stain, original magnification ×20. (D) H&E stain, original magnification ×100. (E) H&E stain, original magnification ×400. (F) H&E stain, original magnification ×400. (G) Immunoperoxidase CD68. Original magnification ×200. (H) Immunoperoxidase CD45. Original magnification ×200.
Follow up of these patients ranged from 18 months to 3 years and all were free from recurrence. The other three patients had a local excision. One patient developed local sceral recurrence 2 months later. He was found to have a metastasis in the parotid area 4 months later, and after a parotidectomy and radical neck dissection, the patient developed multiple pulmonary metastases and died within 1 year. One of the patients was lost to follow up. The third patient who had a local excision went on to develop two recurrences, which subsequently needed excision and cryotherapy. However, after 1 year he was free of any recurrence. Malignant fibrous histiocytomas have a broad range of histological appearances; storiform-plasmacytic, myxoid, giant cell, and inflammatory. The storiform-plasmacytic type is the most common. The cells are predominantly plump pleomorphic spindle-shaped with occasional large, ovoid histiocyte-like cells. Modest amounts of inflammatory cells, such as lymphocytes and plasma cells may be present. The differential diagnosis of a malignant fibrous histiocytoma includes pleomorphic carcinoma, malignant melanoma, and other sarcomas.

For those limbal fibrous histiocytomas with a benign histopathological appearance, the management should be local surgical excision. Malignant fibrous histiocytomas need to be considered to fully excise a limbal malignant fibrous histiocytoma.

C S Daniel, B J Clark, S J Tuft
Moorfields Eye Hospital, 162 City Road, London, EC1V 2PD, UK
Correspondence to: Miss Daniel, Department of Pathology, Institute of Ophthalmology, University College London, Bath Street, London EC1V 9EL, UK
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diseases such as herpetic keratitis and atopic keratoconjunctivitis. To ensure appropriate treatment, the organism must first be identified by cultures in enriched media.

C D Siverio Jr, J P Whiticher
The Francis I Proctor Foundation, UCSF, San Francisco, CA 94143-0944, USA

Correspondence to: Dr John P Whiticher; nepal@itsa.ucsf.edu

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References

Blinking and operating: cognition versus vision

The difference in the refractive indices between the air and the tear film results in the tear film having the greatest optical power of any part of the eye. Eyelid blinks are important for maintenance of the tear film. Between blinks there is progressive thinning of the tear film, which becomes non-uniform on the ocular surface and may break up. This produces an irregular air/tear interface, with a reduction in image quality. The longer the period between blinks the greater the effect on the tear film and reduction in vision. Restoration of the tear film occurs immediately following a blink so that the ability to maintain a regular tear film is dependent on the blink rate. A reduction in the blink rate such as, for example, a pause between blinks of 15 seconds has been associated with a change in the shape of the profile of the corneal tear film and up to a 6% reduction in visual acuity. More importantly, however, a reduction in blink rate leads to a reduction in contrast visual acuity.

The ability to distinguish between different layers during surgery, such as the posterior capsule of the lens and anterior vitreous face, or peeling a layer off the retinal surface in vitreoretinal surgery, is dependent on the surgeon having and maintaining good contrast. Blink rates and blink amplitude vary according to vision related behaviour and a reduction in the blink rate occurs with tasks of increasing visual difficulty. For example, visual tasks requiring concentration, such as video display terminal use, result in a decrease in average blink rate from 18.4/min to 3.6 blinks/min.

In order to determine whether the blink rate of ophthalmic surgeons alters during intracocular surgery, the blink rate patterns of nine ophthalmic surgeons were recorded. Two observers recorded the blink rate during casual conversation and when the surgeons were using the operating microscope. None of the surgeons were aware that their blink rates were being recorded, which was done by two medical students during their ophthalmic attachment—that is, their presence in the theatre was accepted as part of their ophthalmic training. The blink rate for each surgeon was recorded in each condition between four and 10 times. The mean blink rate for each surgeon during casual conversation and while operating are presented in Table 1. There was a significant reduction in the average blink rate between both conditions (16.69/min and 4.75/min, p= 0.0001, paired t-test), on average a three and a half fold decrease occurred while operating. It was also noted that the onset of conversation as such the request for an instrument or demonstration of an intraocular structure, was associated with the onset of a blink response.

The reduction in blink rates observed in this study—that is, 16.69 to 4.75, are similar to that found by Patel et al for visual tasks such as video display terminal use. A reduction in blink rate to 4.75 translates to a reduction in contrast acuity of approximately 10% with four surgeons having an expected reduction of more than 60%. Such a reduction in contrast acuity is likely to have an effect on the ability to differentiate between different intraocular surgical layers. Blinking occurs between visual fixations and may be timed so as not to interfere with significant visual input. Blink rate is low when information memory is operating, and cognitive processes utilising display areas accessible to visual input are disrupted during the blackout period of a blink. Blinking is thus suspended during certain cognitive activities to avoid disrupting these processes.

Tear evaporation is dependent on the width of the palpebral fissure and the surrounding humidity. Evaporation increases with widening of the palpebral aperture leading to a lower tear film stability. This has led to the recommendation that video display unit screens be kept below eye level. During ophthalmic surgery the eye pieces are roughly perpendicular to the face, so that it might be reasonable to lower the height of the eye pieces to reduce the width of the palpebral aperture. Frequent instillation of artificial tears during surgery is not practicable and might also create an abnormal tear film boundary layer. Likewise, increasing the humidity of the theatre may not be feasible. It might be reasonable to make surgeons, and anyone who uses the microscope, aware of this potential problem so that they can train themselves to blink during parts of the operation or investigation where good contrast acuity is not essential and where disruption of the cognitive processes is likely to have a minimal effect.

K K W Wong, W Y Wan, S B Kaye
St Paul’s Eye Unit, Bz Link, Royal Liverpool University Hospital, Prescot Street, Liverpool L7 8XP, UK

Correspondence to: Mr Kaye; stephen.kaye@rlbuh-tr.nwest.nhs.uk

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References

Should we vaccinate for glaucoma surgery?

Trabeculectomy is the most common non-laser surgical procedure performed for treatment of all forms of glaucoma. It involves the fashioning of a fistula from the anterior chamber of the eye to the subconjunctival space. This allows for extra drainage of aqueous humour to the subconjunctival space. This produces a localised elevation of the conjunctiva in the area of the trabeculectomy called a ‘filtering bleb.’ Antimetabolites may be used intraoperatively and perioperatively to increase the success of glaucoma filtering surgery by their action on wound healing. 5-Fluorouracil or mitomycin C is administered to the scleral flap during the procedure. Post-operatively, subconjunctival injections of

Table 1 Average blink rates [No/min] for ophthalmic surgeons during periods of casual conversation and while operating using the microscope

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Surgeon</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>Mean (SD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Casual</td>
<td>17.29</td>
<td>17.75</td>
<td>7.75</td>
<td>17.60</td>
<td>27.44</td>
<td>24.67</td>
<td>11.50</td>
<td>13.86</td>
<td>12.33</td>
<td>16.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating</td>
<td>9.71</td>
<td>9.00</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>7.40</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>8.67</td>
<td>1.59</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>4.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P Value</td>
<td>0.000002</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
<td>0.0003</td>
<td>0.0004</td>
<td>0.0002</td>
<td>0.0003</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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endophthalmitis given the differing pathophysiology of blebitis and endophthalmitis has been described as blebitis. Blebitis is an infection of the trabeculectomy bleb without vitreous involvement.

Clinical features of blebitis include increased axial length, thin leaky bleb, conjunctivitis, upper respiratory tract infection, hibernation occurrence, trauma, and vitreous wicks. With the increased antimetabolite in glaucoma surgery, the incidence of thin walled cystic blebs seems to be increasing. These blebs are more prone to leakage. Some studies conclude that bleb related endophthalmitis is higher when antimetabolites are used. This is more common with inferior limbal trabeculectomy. However, some studies show equal incidence in augmented trabeculectomy and trabeculectomy without antimetabolite augmentation.

There are few data available for the incidence of blebitis. In most reported cases conjunctival swabs were performed for culturing and sensitivity, but organisms causing endophthalmitis may only be present transiently on the ocular surface. In many reports, ocular surface cultures came back positive for Staphylococcus epidermidis and Staphylococcus aureus, which may both be found on healthy normal eyes.

The microbiology of bleb associated endophthalmitis is different from other causes of endophthalmitis. Clinicians should not extrapolate the results of the Endophthalmitis Vitrectomy study to the post-filteration surgery endophthalmitis given the differing pathogenesis and unique spectrum of organisms. The most common organisms are Streptococci species. The second most common is Haemophilus influenzae type b at over 23%. Of the streptococci, S pneumoniae may account for approximately 12%. Between them H influenzae type b and S pneumoniae probably cause more than 35% of blebitis and bleb associated endophthalmitis.

The treatment of endophthalmitis is expensive. It usually involves admission of the patient and frequent use of expensive drops as well as surgical intervention. Inpatient treatment for blebitis has been priced at US$892 (approximately £540) per 24 hours. This can work out to more than £3000 for a 10 day stay in hospital. Furthermore, the cost of follow up visits and the morbidity that is involved need to be taken into account. Frequently these patients have pre-existing visual impairment and an episode of endophthalmitis may result in a falsely amended or blind registration, an individual disaster with wider social implications.

Infections caused by Haemophilus influenzae type b are primarily in children under the age of 3. This illness is caused by Haemophilus influenzae type b conjugated to a protein carrier. Side effects of the vaccine include fever, headache, malaise, irritability, loss of appetite, vomiting, diarrhea, rash, urticaria, convulsions, erythema multiforme, and transient cyanosis of the lower limbs. Its cost to the NHS is as low as £8.32 for a single dose of 0.5 ml.

Pneumococcal vaccine is available. It is a polyvalent pneumococcal polysaccharide from each of 23 capsular types of Streptococcus pneumoniae. The vaccine is recommended from the age of 2 for children with certain conditions: haemoglobinopathies, sickle cell disease, asplenia or dysfunc-

The wide field multifocal electroretinogram reveals retinal dysfunction in early retinitis pigmentosa

The diagnosis of retinitis pigmentosa (RP) is made on the basis of characteristic retinal pigmentary changes, visual field defects, and reduction in amplitude or loss of rod scotopic standard electroretinographic (ERG) responses, with a possible history of night blindness and a positive family history of RP. Multifocal electrophysiology (mERG) is a new technique that constructs a topographic image of retinal function. Reports have suggested that the spatial resolution of mERG is sufficient to detect focal changes in retinal function as RP progresses.

We describe a case of early RP, in which the amplitude and implicit times of the patient's standard ERG rod and maximal responses were normal in the right eye and equivocal in the left eye. However, the peripheral retinal mERG amplitude and implicit times were reduced and delayed. These abnormalities were obtained using a custom built wide field mERG, which facilitates assessment of a 90 degree retinal field.

Case report

A 29 year old woman was referred to the eye clinic by her optometrist. Abnormal retinal pigmentary changes were found in both fundi on routine examination. She had no visual problems and was otherwise systemically well. Her 51 year old mother is known to have RP.

On examination, she had 0.5 diopters of hypermetropia in both eyes. Her corrected logMAR visual acuities were 0.075 in the right eye and 0.025 in the left. Her colour vision, anterior segment examination, and intraocular pressure were normal in both eyes. Fundus examination revealed semicircular arcs of intraretinal “bone spicule” pigmentation in the inferior mid-periphery of each retina. Her optic discs appeared normal and there was no evidence of attenuation of the retinal vasculature.

References

There was an arc of absolute visual field defect in the superior field, symmetrical in both eyes, maintained fixation throughout the test.

A Humphrey 120 point threshold related perimetry test was performed and the patient maintained fixation throughout the test. There was an arc of absolute visual field defect in the superior field, symmetrical in both eyes, 40 degrees from fixation, which was more extensive superotemporally than supranasally. A Ganzfeld ERG test was performed in accordance with international standards. The implicit times and amplitude of the scotopic rod, photopic cone and flicker responses of the patient were normal. The scotopic maximal b-wave amplitude was reduced by 14% in the left eye and normal in the right eye (Fig 1).

Wide field mfERG was performed, using a technique previously described. The amplitudes of the central and peripheral mfERG responses were grouped and averaged (Fig 2A) and compared with similar responses from normative data (Fig 2B). The average amplitude of the central mfERG response was 75 nV in the right and 101 nV in the left (normal range 74–122 nV) (Fig 2A). The average peripheral retinal mfERG responses were 29 nV in the right eye and 45 nV in the left eye (normal range 61–108 nV). The normal range is derived from a group of 40 controls, aged 20–40 years. In addition, the mfERG responses were reduced in areas that had normal visual field sensitivities.

Comment
Retinitis pigmentosa in its early stages of evolution is characterised by rod dominated photoreceptor dysfunction. Although mfERG is a photopic response, thought to predominantly reflect cone function, the nature of mfERG stimulation (that is, stimulation frequencies from 5 Hz to 75 Hz), indicates that this composite response may contain contributions from rods, in addition to cones and postsynaptic receptor cells.

The global nature of the Ganzfeld ERG requires approximately 30% of the retina to be dysfunctional before abnormalities can be detected. In this case report, the standard ERG did not help to confirm the diagnosis of RP. However, the spatial resolution of the peripheral wide field mfERG indicated peripheral retinal dysfunction, suggestive of RP.

We conclude that wide field mfERG may have advantages over Ganzfeld ERG in the electrophysiological diagnosis of some forms of early RP. Further evaluation of wide field mfERG in the diagnosis and follow up of early RP is indicated.

Day 1 review following cataract surgery: are we seeing the precise details?

The Royal College of Ophthalmologists published cataract surgery guidelines in February 2001. This document includes protocols relating to postoperative visits suggesting that there are no additional risks to patients who are not reviewed on the first postoperative day. This is a change in recommendation from previous college guidelines in 1995 suggesting a review within 48 hours.

There may follow a growing impetus for ophthalmologists to dispense with the first day review, given the reduced demand on clinical time and the corresponding accrual of staffing and financial resource benefits. While we applaud the dissemination of practice guidelines, they constitute “merely tools, not rules” to aid clinical decision making. They may have inherent limitations in particular circumstances and may require evaluation for effective application in clinical settings.

Four studies were quoted by the guideline authors, three of which advocated the omission of day after review and one of which was equivocal, suggesting that it was unsafe to abandon this practice unless raised intraocular pressures (IOP) were controlled. The numbers of patients included ranged from 100 to 387. The results of these studies are shown in Table 1.

Comment
In our view, deriving meaningful conclusions that may underpin clinical practice are difficult, owing to the varying methodological
approaches used in these studies. In Tufail's study, extracapsular cataract extraction was the predominant surgical technique used. Cohen et al excluded more than 50% of patients with complicated ocular histories or complicated surgery and Whitefield et al had similar extensive exclusion criteria, although the number excluded was not mentioned.

We would draw attention to a recently published study by McKellar and Elder, which to our knowledge is one of the largest cohort studies, aside from national cataract surveys, reporting on first and seventh day complications of cataract surgery. Of 1000 patients, the study found that on the first postoperative day complications were observed in 10% of eyes, of which 88% was raised IOP. Unlike most of the previous studies, all patients with available records were eligible, including those with preoperative risk factors and those with surgical complications. These figures align more closely with our "gold standard" of the National Cataract Surgery Survey than the previous mentioned studies. The events most frequently occurring within 48 hours after surgery in the national survey were corneal oedema (9.5%), raised IOP (7.9%), and uveits (5.6%). Overall, 23.3% of patients had early postoperative complications ranging from minor to sight threatening conditions. The survey also found that several risk indicators were associated with poorer visual outcomes and complications related to cataract surgery: age, ocular co-morbidity (glaucoma, macular degeneration, amblyopia, and previous ocular surgery), diabetes mellitus, stroke, type of surgical procedure, and grade of surgeon.

In summary, up to 20 000 patients a year in the United Kingdom (10%) may have an unreported early postoperative complication such as corneal oedema or raised IOP if first day review was abandoned. And if McKellar's study is representative, then 5% of patients would have raised pressure without any previous history or surgical complication and 0.9% of patients could have other potentially serious early complications. Nationally, that equates to almost 12 000 patients annually. It is worth noting that the American Academy of Ophthalmology in its white paper, concludes that there are enough significant early postoperative complications to warrant first day review. Are we sufficiently confident in our own practices to diverge?

Credit should be apportioned to the distinguished authors of the cataract surgery guidelines suggesting 24 hour follow up of patients who had undergone complicated surgery, had coexisting eye disease, or had large incision cataract surgery. We would like to reiterate the importance of explicit criteria as part of any review policy and suggest that clinical interpretation of individual circumstances is paramount.

To reconcile the need for an efficient, cost effective review protocol together with a necessity to give due consideration to the entirety of detrimental post-cataract complications, especially given the NHS resource constraints, is difficult. A pragmatic approach may be for clinicians to be discriminately aware of those patients most at risk of developing early complications and instituting review policies accordingly, together with an open door policy for patients who need or want reassurance on the first day following uncomplicated surgery. Furthermore, a multi-professional management approach involving the extended role of trained ophthalmic nurses in postoperative care may reduce demands on physician time.

At the moment, there is a paucity of a good prospective literature on the subject and a need for future studies to address whether those identified complications would result in a change of management at the first postoperative day visit and whether patients would have a poorer outcome if the changes were not instituted.

D Goh
Royal Surrey County Hospital, Guildford GU2 5XX, UK
N Lim
The Western Eye Hospital, Marylebone Road, London NW1 5YE, UK

Correspondence to: Dr Goh; davidgoh1@aol.com
Accepted for publication 29 November 2001

References

Choroidal abnormalities in neurofibromatosis type 1 with non-invasive infrared imaging

Retinal abnormalities have been reported worldwide in patients with neurofibromatosis type 1.14 However, there have been few reports of choroidal abnormalities.15 We report a patient with choroidal abnormalities, associated with neurofibromatosis type 1, using a scanning laser ophthalmoscope (SLO).

Comment

In this case, we observed choroidal abnormalities in a patient with neurofibromatosis type 1. The conventional fundus examination, including biomicroscopic examination and fundus colour photography, did not show remarkable changes. However, the SLO examination showed regions of bright patches with infrared imaging using the direct confocal mode and dark patches using the indirect mode in both posterior poles. Infrared light penetrates the retina into the choroid more than visible light. Therefore, the bright patch regions seen with confocal infrared imaging and the absence of such regions under helium-neon light examination indicates that the patchy regions are of choroidal origin, as reported by Yasunari and colleagues. In addition, we observed dark patchy regions in the corresponding area using the indirect mode of infrared imaging (which also can obtain images of the deeper retinal layers non-invasively) instead of using indocyanine green fundus angiography. Yasunari and colleagues reported that choroidal abnormalities (100%) occurred more frequently than plexiform neurofibroma (29%) and Sakurai-Lisch nodules in the iris (76%).

Table 1 Day 1 postoperative complications noted in clinical studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study/In patients</th>
<th>Cornea oedema</th>
<th>Raised IOP</th>
<th>Uveits</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tufail et al (387)</td>
<td>4 (1%)</td>
<td>8 (2%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12 (3.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitefield et al (100)</td>
<td>10 (10%)</td>
<td>3 (3%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohen et al (301)</td>
<td>26 (8.6%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12 (4%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tan et al (227)</td>
<td>5 (4.4%)</td>
<td>3 (1.3%)</td>
<td>1 (0.4%)</td>
<td>3 (1.3%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1 SLO image of the right eye using the infrared direct confocal mode.

Figure 2 SLO image of the right eye using the indirect confocal mode.
They also reported that bright patchy choroidal regions should be a new diagnostic criterion for neurofibromatosis type 1. The non-invasive SLO examination with confocal and indirect infrared imaging may be useful in the diagnosis of patients with neurofibromatosis type 1.

F Mori, N Kitaya, T Hikichi, A Yoshida
Department of Ophthalmology, Asahikawa Medical College, Asahikawa, Japan

Correspondence to: Fumihiko Mori, MD, PhD, Department of Ophthalmology, Asahikawa Medical College, Midorigaoka Higashi 2-1-1, Asahikawa 078-8510, Japan; morinao@d5.dion.ne.jp

The authors have no proprietary interest in any aspect of this report.

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References

Corneal melt and perforation secondary to floppy eyelid syndrome in the presence of rheumatoid arthritis

Floppy eyelid syndrome (FES) is an uncommon condition that it is often underdiagnosed or misdiagnosed owing to the somewhat trivial and non-specific symptoms with which it often presents. In association with the dry eye of rheumatoid arthritis it can, however, have devastating effects.

Case report
A 60 year old moderately obese man with well controlled rheumatoid arthritis (RA) presented to the eye clinic with recurrent red and gritty eyes. A diagnosis of dry eye syndrome with blepharitis was made. He was also found to have a mucocele of the left lacrimal sac. Lid hygiene and ocular lubricants yielded an initial improvement, but he was discharged. He re-presented 5 years later with similar symptoms and reduced visual acuity (VA) of 6/36 in the left eye. A diagnosis of dry eye syndrome with secondary corneal epithelial changes was made. Topical lubricants failed to relieve the condition satisfactorily and he was therefore scheduled for punctal occlusion. However, upon admission for this 8 weeks later, he was found to have an asymptomatic perforation of the left cornea, with a VA of 6/60. The perforation was treated with glue and a bandage contact lens, topical antibiotic, steroids, and lubricants. Systemic immunosuppression was considered in view of the history of RA, but was withheld as a heavy growth of staphylococcus had been cultured from the cornea. The right eye demonstrated signs of dryness but was otherwise healthy with VA of 6/9.

Bilateral punctual occlusion was undertaken as planned, and in addition a left dacrocystorhinostomy (DCR) to eliminate the mucocele as a potential reservoir of infection. The eye, however, continued to slowly deteriorate, with persisting mucopurulent discharge, despite the DCR. Eventually uncontrolled endothelialitis developed requiring evisceration.

He re-presented 8 months later with reduced VA of 6/60 in the right eye secondary to a corneal melt (Fig 1A). A chronic mucopurulent discharge had also developed in the right eye, but no lacrimal sac mucocele was identifiable. On this occasion, however, it was noted on examination that while everting the upper lid may lead to repetitive injury which could injure tarsal elastin. In addition, there is a high incidence of obstructive sleep apnoea in FES patients and post-excisional specimens has revealed normal tarsal collagen, elastin fibres are nearly absent. It is unclear whether this finding is causative or secondary. During sleep, a local pressure induced ischaemia may develop in the tarsus that, when relieved, results in a reperfusion injury which could injure tarsal elastin. A florid papillary conjunctivitis and only two cases of endophthalmitis have been reported in association with FES and only two cases of endophthalmitis have been reported in association with FES, but these cases are not likely to occur in association with FES and secondary corneal changes has been proposed. Unrecognizable predisposing factors, possibly congenital characteristics or that may lead to its development and to the secondary corneal involvement is rare, with only four reported in the literature of ulceration in association with FES and only two cases of endophthalmitis have been reported in association with FES. Although the exact pathophysiology of FES is uncertain, a sequence of events may lead to its development and to the secondary corneal involvement is rare, with only four reported in the literature of ulceration in association with FES. This case serves as a reminder that multiple pathologies are present. Blepharitis and RA associated dry eye may both independently cause significant corneal pathology.

Comment
FES occurs most frequently in middle aged obese males, although it has been described in young, slim males, females, and one child. Typically, the upper tarsus is rubbery and the upper eyelid everts easily with gentle upward pressure. A florid papillary conjunctivitis and chronic mucus discharge are common. Severe corneal involvement is rare, with only four cases reported in the literature of ulceration in association with FES and only two cases of endophthalmitis have been reported in association with FES. This case serves as a reminder that multiple pathologies may contribute to the clinical picture. If FES is not to be missed, ocular examination must include lid eversion and inspection of the tarsus.

J D Rossiter
Southampton Eye Unit, Southampton General Hospital, Tremona Road, Southampton SO16 6YD, UK

R Ellingham
Bristol Eye Hospital, Lower Maudlin Street, Bristol BS1 2UX, UK

K N Hakin, J M Twomey
Department of Ophthalmology, Taunton and Somerset Hospital, Taunton TA1 5DA, UK

Correspondence to: Mr Rossiter
Accepted for publication 10 October 2001

References
Ocular trauma with small framed spectacles

Penetrating injuries are widely reported with spectacle related eye trauma, particularly in car accidents.1–4 The use of high grade plastics and secure frames have been shown to reduce the incidence of spectacle related eye trauma.5 Spectacle safety may be compromised in the trend for small frames and frameless spectacles and may place patients at risk of serious ocular injury.6

We present the case of an aphakic patient who sustained a blunt injury following ocular compression by her spectacles. Her injuries could have been avoided if larger framed spectacles had been worn.

Case report

A 79 year old aphakic woman sustained a non-penetrating injury to her left globe by walking into a door. She noted a sharp pain and sudden loss of vision. The globe was compressed by her spectacles, which were smaller than her orbital rim. Her glasses were not damaged and there was minimal periocular soft tissue injury.

She was aphakic, following bilateral cataract extraction for congenital cataracts. The spectacle refraction was +9.00 with a short back vertex distance of 5 mm (Fig 1).

The pinhole acuity was 6/36, a quiet, deep anterior chamber was noted with no aqueous leak, the intraocular pressure was 0 mm Hg. Funduscopy revealed a light vitreous haemorrhage, peripapillary choroidal ruptures, and a 360 degree suprachoroidal haemorrhage (Fig 2).

Hypotony following traumatic ciliary artery spasm was diagnosed and the patient was treated conservatively, with topical atropine and frame factors in the reduction of eye trauma.

The recent trends towards smaller framed spectacles has not been reported as a potential risk to the patient; however, in this case, with small framed spectacles (with a short back vertex distance), minor trauma was sufficient to cause serious eye injury. The patient's previous larger framed spectacles would have prevented such an injury as the lenses would have been supported by the orbital margin and not the globe.

This case demonstrates the previously unconsidered risk of small framed spectacles in aphakic patients. The back vertex distance may be short, increasing the risk of blunt injury.

Comment

The potential ocular damage from framed and frameless spectacles has been highlighted in a number of reports.1–4 These often result from minor road traffic accidents or inflation of air bags that damage the spectacles. The trauma is usually sufficient to break the lenses in the spectacles and the resultant globe laceration is the main cause of morbidity.

We report our experiences with two patients who had permanent reduction in visual acuity 1–2 years after implantation of the SC60B-OUV IOL.

Case reports

Case 1

An 82 year old man with visual acuities of 6/60 in both eyes because of a right macular hole and left posterior subcapsular cataract underwent routine left phacoemulsification and intraocular lens implantation in March 1998. A foldable hydrophilic acrylic IOL (Model SC60B-OUV, MDR, Inc) was implanted in the capsular bag. Postoperative recovery was uneventful, with left visual acuity improving to 6/4 with correction, 6 weeks after the surgery.

He was referred back to the clinic in March 2000 with symptoms of intermittent binocular diplopia, which was relieved with Fresnel prisms. His left visual acuity was 6/6, but the intraocular lens was found to be uniformly cloudy (Fig 1A). As the patient was not experiencing any symptoms from his cloudy IOL, no intervention was advised. Over the next 6 months the brownish discoloration of the IOL increased in intensity and the patient complained of “foggy vision.” His visual acuity dropped to 6/12 and he was disturbed, but clear images from his right eye and hazy images from his left eye. Fundus examination of the left eye has also become progressively difficult. IOL exchange is being considered, bearing in mind the presence of the macular hole in the fellow eye and the risks of removing a posterior chamber IOL 3 years after implantation.

Case 2

A 78 year old woman with bilateral Fuchs’ corneal endothelial dystrophy and long standing central retinal vein occlusion in the left eye, underwent uneventful right phacoemulsification with intraocular lens implantation (Model SC60B-OUV, MDR, Inc) in August 1998. Her right visual acuity improved to 6/9, surgical acuity of 6/18, and improved vision of 6/12. Over the subsequent 2 years she developed a cloudy (Fig 1B) right IOL. This patient had a high grade acrylic lens (Hydroview lens, Bausch & Lomb) and the model SC60B-OUV (Medical Developmental Research, Clearwater, FL, USA).1–4 We report the late opacification of an acrylic IOL with an IOL in the capsular bag.

Late opacification of SC60B-OUV acrylic intraocular lenses

Optical clarity of the intraocular lens (IOL) is paramount in maintaining visual improvement after cataract extraction. While the advent of newer foldable IOLs have revolutionised cataract surgery by the smaller incisions required, their long term safety has to be established only with time. There have been recent reports of two separate groups of hydrophilic IOLs that have shown various degrees of opacification, 6 months to 2 years after implantation.1–4 These include the Hydroview lens (Bausch & Lomb) and the model SC60B-OUV (Medical Developmental Research, Clearwater, FL, USA).1–4

We report our experiences with two patients who had permanent reduction in visual acuity 1–2 years after implantation of the SC60B-OUV IOL.

Figure 1 (A) Diffuse opacification of the IOL 2 years after implantation in case 1. (B) The explanted opacified IOL optic from case 2 is compared to a normal acrylic IOL.
but approximately 1 year after the surgery there was gradual deterioration of vision to 6/24 in August 2000. At this stage the IOL was noted to be cloudy; there was also progression of her endothelial dystrophy. She underwent uneventful right penetrating keratoplasty with exchange of posterior chamber IOL in November 2000 and has a current right visual acuity of 6/12. The explanted opacified IOL is compared to a normal clear acrylic IOL in Figure 1B.

**Comment**

The safety and efficacy of AcrySof polyacrylic IOLs has been reported to be equal to or better than that of a normal clear acrylic IOL in Figure 1B. The safety and efficacy of AcrySof polyacrylic IOLs has been reported to be equal to or better than that of a normal clear acrylic IOL in Figure 1B. However, there was gradual deterioration of vision to 6/24 in August 2000. At this stage the IOL was noted to be cloudy; there was also progression of her endothelial dystrophy. She underwent uneventful right penetrating keratoplasty with exchange of posterior chamber IOL in November 2000 and has a current right visual acuity of 6/12. The explanted opacified IOL is compared to a normal clear acrylic IOL in Figure 1B.

**References**


**Treatment of superior limbic keratoconjunctivitis with a unilateral bandage contact lens**

The typical patient with superior limbic keratoconjunctivitis (SLK) is a woman aged between 20 and 60 years of age with chronic red and itchy eyes. Although both eyes are usually affected, the condition may be asymmetrical. After episodes of exacerbation and remission it usually resolves. The patient may also have abnormal thyroid function. SLK has been treated with silver nitrate or thermal cauterisation of the superior bulbar conjunctiva, pressure patching, and large diameter bandage contact lenses (BCL), topical trans-retinoic acid 0.1%, and recession or resection of the superior bulbar conjunctiva. Over 50% of patients with SLK are said to have keratoconjunctivitis sicca and recently upper punctal plugs have been used to treat SLK.

We report two cases in which a unilateral BCL wear ameliorated the symptoms of bilateral SLK and a possible explanation is discussed.

**Case reports**

**Case 1**

A 38 year old woman presented with a 3 month history of irritable photophobic eyes that were unresponsive to preserved lubricants. Her right eye was amblyopic. On review 2 months after insertion of the BCL was lost and her bilateral ocular discomfort and redness persisted. Schirmer’s test without anaesthesia was 6 mm on the left and 12 mm on the right and the propylthiouracil was ceased exporting SC60B-OUV lenses in June 1997 by Medical Development Research (MDR, Inc). More than 60 000 of these lenses have been implanted worldwide, but only outside the United States. Reports of opacification of the IOL started coming through to the manufacturer in May 1999. (Summary of SC60B-OUV lens opacification investigation, personal communication from MDR, Inc, 20 July 2001.) Several theories have been put forward to explain the late clouding of the IOL optic. Analysis of 23 explanted IOLs of the same model and demonstrated the presence of calcium phosphate salts in the deposits within the optic of the IOL. Werner et al analysed nine explanted IOLs of the same model and demonstrated the presence of calcium phosphate salts in the deposits within the optic of the IOL. Investigations by the manufacturers identified four lots of polymeric biomaterial formulated and prepared by Vista Optics (London) and used by MDR, Inc in the IOL manufacture, that correlated with opacification complaints (Summary of SC60B-OUV lens opacification investigation, personal communication from MDR, Inc, 20 July 2001).

Ninety two of the estimated 60 000 SC60B-OUV IOLs implanted were explanted and returned to the company, MDR, Inc ceased exporting SC60B-OUV lenses in June 2000 and claims that the opacification represents only 0.15% of total SC60B-OUV IOLs implanted. (Summary of SC60B-OUV lens opacification investigation, personal communication from MDR, Inc, 20 July 2001). However, this does not account for those patients who have not yet had their opaque IOLs identified or explanted. The lateness of the onset of opacification and resulting visual disability may mean that we are seeing only the tip of the iceberg.

**A Joseph, H S Dua**

Division of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences, University of Nottingham

Correspondence to: Professor H S Dua, Division of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences, B Floor, Eye Ear Nose and Throat Block, University Hospital, Queen’s Medical Centre, Nottingham NG7 2UH, UK; harminder.dua@nottingham.ac.uk

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**References**


**Figure 1** Case 2, left eye. (A) The superior bulbar conjunctiva, at presentation, showing hyperaemia and rose bengal staining. (B) After 3 months of bandage contact lens wear the superior conjunctival hyperaemia had resolved and the patient was asymptomatic.

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impair the normal turnover of bulbar conjunctival epithelial cells.1 1 This may be aggravated, in some patients, by blepharospasm, which increases the force on the globe.2

Therapeutic lenses can produce rapid symptomatic relief in SLK. They may be helpful in the treatment of SLK as they relieve the pain and facilitate healing of punctate epithelial erosions by protecting the ocular surface from the eyelids, reduce upper lid pressure on the globe and increase tear dynamics.3 During blinking as the upper lid moves downwards to meet the lower lid significant forces are exerted on the globe.4 The lens can reduce the force on the superior limbus from blinking as it has a lower mechanical stiffness and elastic modulus.5

In the first week of contact lens wear tear production increases dramatically and tear tonicity decreases.6 Tear production then normalizes and tear tonicity rises as evaporation increases.7 A lens may then aid aqueous tear deficiency, which can accompany SLK, by ensuring a continuous precorneal tear film.8 It is certain of the mechanism of bilateral symptomatic relief from unilateral BCL wear in SLK. One possible explanation is that BCL wear reduces the tactile corneral reflex which takes 1–2 hours after lens insertion, and this reduction, which increases with the duration of lens wear, would then decrease bilateral reflex blinking.9 10 This would protect the superior limbus in both eyes from the friction associated with blinking and may also break the cycle that leads to blepharospasm in SLK.11

It should not be forgotten that continuous BCL wear carries risks including microbial keratitis and corneal vascularization.12 New extended wear silicone BCL, as used in our patients, increase oxygen transfer and have been shown to reduce such risks.13

S Watson, A B Tullo, F Carley

Corneal Unit, Manchester Royal Eye Hospital, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9YW, UK

Correspondence to: Mr Tullo; atullo@central.cshf.nwsths.nhs.uk

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References


Keratctasia after PTK

Takahashi and colleagues have elegantly described an interesting and rare complication of phototherapeutic keratectomy (PTK) in their recent report of an unusual case of keratctasia after PTK.1 The hypothesis that risk of ectasia is proportional to residual stromal base, or depth of ablation, fits with the assumed biomechanical aetiology of this recently reported complication of laser refractive surgery. The generally accepted empirical minimum thickness of 250–300 µm of corneal stroma, excluding flap thickness, remains speculative, as we do not understand the underlying pathophysiology. Indeed, although Holland et al12 highlighted the association of thin residual stromal thicknesses, post-PRK and LASIK, with keratctasia, they also described this complication after surface ablation hyperopic PRK ablation, where the centre was minimally ablated and residual stromal thickness was greater than 360 µm.12

The authors suggest, in the reported case, that band-shaped keratopathy (BSK) may have compressed the tensile strength of the cornea. This seems unlikely as this condition generally affects the superficial anterior cornea, and usually does not penetrate deeper than Bowman’s layer. Its suitability for treatment by PTK. However, further clinical detail which the authors have not provided might reveal underlying corneal pathology with secondary “rough” BSK rather than “smooth” BSK.

However, there are a number of reasons, other than simple biomechanical compromise, for keratctasia following PTK in this case: (1) forme fruste keratoconus—as no preoperative topography or surface asymmetry values are presented to enable the reader to rule this out; (2) clinical keratoconus, which seems less likely in respect of patient’s age and a preoperative cylindrical error of only −1.50 D; (3) idiopathic keratctasia, possibly secondary to widespread deregulated keratocyte apoptosis. The latter has been demonstrated after LASIK, with a considerable and longstanding decrease in keratocytes in the peri-ablation area.13 Also, Helena et al14 demonstrated apoptosis to a depth of at least 50 µm after all of the following procedures: epithelial scrape, corneal scrape PRK, transepithelial PRK and LASIK. Epithelial scrape and LASIK demonstrated keratocyte apoptosis to depths of up to 75 µm and 100 µm, respectively. The authors have recently identified a keratocyte free zone 160 µm into the stroma following LASIK, and theoretically more widespread apoptosis as a response to excimer laser photorefractive surgery, may contribute to keratctasia.

While it is difficult to ascertain why keratctasia occurs, in this case with a residual stromal thickness of over 500 µm, from the data provided the most likely aetiologies would seem to be either undiagnosed forme fruste keratoconus or idiopathic keratctasia. Currently, recent reviews illustrate the dearth of substantial information available regarding idiopathic keratctasia (iatrogenic keratoconus), with a little over 60 cases published. At this point, although some are likely to be due to over-ablation, for many cases such as this the exact aetiology remains unknown and is likely to be multifactorial, and one of these factors is residual corneal thickness. The fact that keratctasia can occur, after what would be considered minimal ablation, highlights the unpredictable nature of occurrence, but with over a million cases of LASIK or PRK occurring each year, the stimulus to identify contributing factors is significant.

Simon J Dean, Charles N J McGhee

Discipline of Ophthalmology, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, University of Auckland, Private Bag 92019, Auckland, New Zealand

Correspondence to: Professor C J McGhee; c.mcghee@auckland.ac.nz
radiotherapy for ARMD this would be a good source of material and is well referenced.

There are a few chapters on the clinical manifestations, diagnosis, and surgery of ARMD but there is no real mention of laser treatment. Many of these chapters are of limited scope and do not provide a comprehensive overview of the ophthalmic assessment and management of ARMD.

Although not stated in the book it reads as if it is the proceedings of a clinical meeting. The chapters do not read in a coordinated way and essentially present the results of individual units describing their methods and results of radiotherapy. As such it is a useful source of information for the clinician, with an interest in this topic but it is of limited value for ophthalmologists wishing to obtain a balanced view of current treatment of ARMD.

A Dick

Clinical Ophthalmic Pathology.


This is an excellent, easy to read, well illustrated book. It is one of the first of its kind to bring pathology alive by describing diseases via pathogenesis as opposed to anatomy. For the trainee in ophthalmology, optometry and visual science it, therefore, provides a more logical approach to the understanding of ocular diseases. As the book attempts to cover many subjects it sometimes does not do justice to each. It would have been better to have had the reading lists at the end of each chapter. However, as it stands the book is an excellent introduction to pathology complementing clinical textbooks. If read together with clinical texts it certainly will complement clinical textbooks. If read

Second Sight

Second Sight, a UK based charity whose aims are to eliminate the backlog of cataract blind in India by the year 2020 and to establish strong links between Indian and British ophthalmologists, is regularly sending volunteer surgeons to India. Details can be found at the charity website (www.secondsight.org.uk) or by contacting Dr Lucy Mathen (lucymathen@yahoo.com).

Specific Eye Conditions (SPECS)

Sectif Eye Conditions (SPECS) is a not for profit organisation which acts as an umbrella organisation for support groups of any conditions or syndrome with an integral eye disorder. SPECS represents over fifty different organisations related to eye disorders ranging from conditions that are relatively common to very rare syndromes. We also include groups who offer support of a more general nature to visually impaired and blind people. Support groups meet regularly in the Boardroom at Moorfields Eye Hospital to offer support to each other, share experiences and explore new ways of working together. The web site www.eyeconditions.org.uk acts as a portal giving direct access to support groups own sites. The SPECS web page is a valuable resource for professionals and may also be of interest to people with a visual impairment or who are blind. For further details about SPECS contact: Kay Parkinson, SPECS Development Officer (tel: +44 (0)1803 524238; email: k@eyeconditions.org.uk; www.eyeconditions.org.uk).

XXIXth International Congress of Ophthalmology

The XXIXth International Congress of Ophthalmology will be held on 21–25 April 2002 in Sydney, Australia. Further details: Congress Secretariat, C/- ICMS Australia Pty Ltd, GPO Box 2609, Sydney, NSW 2001, Australia (tel: +61 2 9241 4178; fax: +61 2 9251 3552; email: ophthalm@icmsaust.com.au; website: www.ophthalmology.aust.com).

12th Meeting of the European Association for the Study of Diabetic Eye Complications (EASDEC)

The 12th meeting of the EASDEC will be held on 24–26 May 2002 in Udine, Italy. The deadline for abstracts is 15 February 2003. Three travel grants for young members (less than 35 years of age at the time of the meeting) are available. For information on the travel grants, please contact Pr CD Agardh, President of EASDEC, Malmö University Hospital, SE-205 02 Malmö, Sweden (tel: +46 40 33 73 66; email: carldavid.agardh@endo.mas.lu.se). Further details:

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