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Complications of uveitis in children according to age: The risk of amblyopia

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Purpose: The aim of this paper is to outline the most common presentations, etiologies, complications and visual outcomes of uveitis among children according to age.

Methods: The medical records of patients 16 years of age or less diagnosed with uveitis presenting to AUBMC between 2009 and 2012 were reviewed.

Results: Children were found to represent 15% of our uveitis cohort at AUBMC. 79 eyes of 50 children were identified. The most common presentations were chronic (61%), bilateral (61%), anterior uveitis (40%). Younger children had significantly more anterior uveitis while older children had more panuveitis. The most common etiologies associated with the uveitis were idiopathic (48%), juvenile idiopathic arthritis (12%) and Toxoplasmosis (10%). On presentation, 45% of the eyes had visual acuity of 20/50 or worse and 20% had visual acuity of 20/200 or worse. While on last follow up, 35% of the eyes had visual impairment with visual acuity of 20/50 or worse and 15% had severe visual impairment with visual acuity of 20/200 or worse. The most common causes of reduced vision were cataract (39%), cystoid macular edema (10%) and glaucoma (5.5%). While amblyopia was the most common complication among children younger than 8 years of age and it occurred in 23% of children in that age group.

Conclusion: One third of our pediatric patients with uveitis had visual impairment while amblyopia was the most common complication in the visually immature. Increased awareness about these outcomes might help improve the care especially in the visually immature by assessing and treating amblyopia when present.

Results & Conclusion: Children were found to represent 15% of our uveitis cohort at AUBMC. 79 eyes of 50 children were identified for the purposes of this study. The most common presentation was chronic uveitis in 61% of the cases. The inflammation was most commonly bilateral (61%). Anterior uveitis was the most common presenting location of the uveitis in 40% of the eyes. The most common etiologies associated with the uveitis were idiopathic which represented 48% of the cases, juvenile idiopathic arthritis in 12% and Toxoplasmosis in 10%. On presentation, 45% of the eyes had visual acuity of 20/50 or worse and 20% had visual acuity of 20/200 or worse. While on last follow up, 35% of the eyes had visual impairment with visual acuity of 20/50 or worse and 15% had severe visual impairment with visual acuity of 20/200 or worse. The most common causes of reduced vision on last follow up were cataract (which was present in 39% of the eyes, cystoid macular edema present in 10% and glaucoma in 5.5%). On the other hand, amblyopia occurred in 23% of children younger than 8 years of age and was the most common complication in the visually immature. In conclusion, one third of our pediatric patients with uveitis had visual impairment on last follow up. Increased awareness about these outcomes might help improve the care especially in the visually immature when amblyopia might still be reversible if promptly diagnosed and treated.

Biography

Rola N Hamam is an Assistant Professor of Ophthalmology at the American University of Beirut. She is the Director of the residency training program and the medical retina fellowship training program. She received her BS degree in biology from the American University of Beirut in 1998 and her MD in 2002. She completed her residency in Ophthalmology at the same institution then had fellowship training at Harvard University in Boston at the Beetham Eye Institute, the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary, and the Massachusetts Eye Research and Surgery Institution with Doctor C Stephen Foster until 2008. She returned to her home country and joined her Alma matter in 2009 to start the first uveitis specialty referral clinic in the country at the American University of Beirut. She is a member of several national and international societies. She has organized and lectured on ocular immunology and uveitis in many national and international conferences and scientific meetings. She is involved in multiple research projects on ocular inflammatory and infectious disease and she continues to contribute scientific publications in the field.

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