Atypical Bilateral Morning Glory Syndrome

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Introduction

Morning Glory Syndrome is a non-hereditary optic nerve malformation, most frequently unilateral and in women, rarely affecting black patients. The optic disk is abnormally excavated and funnel-shaped, with an hypopigmented neuroretinal rim and radially-oriented vessels. Up to one third of patients present with a retinal detachment, and this syndrome may be associated with other craniofacial abnormalities.

Case Report

We present the case of a 29-year old black man, that presented to our department in 2007 with a history of rapidly decreasing visual acuity in the left eye. Examination at that time was remarkable for a complete retinal detachment in the left eye, along with a markedly excavated, pale, funnel-shaped optic disc in the contralateral eye, with the depression extending to the macular area. The findings were compatible with a bilateral morning-glory syndrome, with macular involvement, presenting with a unilateral retinal detachment, prompting urgent surgery. 3 years later, the patient returned with complaints of loss of vision in the right eye, which also presented with a retinal detachment requiring surgical intervention. In spite of the low remaining visual function, the patient surprisingly leads a highly productive life, excelling both in sports and arts.

Conclusions

Morning glory syndrome is a disorder with a wide spectrum of presentations and severity, as illustrated by our case. Severe cases may present with a complete macular involvement, as well as retinal detachment. This disease has potentially devastating visual complications, and patients require a close follow up and counselling to quickly diagnose retinal complications and provide early intervention.