

Pattern of Presentation of Sickle Cell Retinopathy in Ilorin

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Purpose: This study aimed at determining the pattern of clinical presentation of sickle cell retinopathy in the eye clinic at the University of Ilorin Teaching Hospital, Ilorin.

Methods: A retrospective review of the medical records of twenty-three sickle cell patients who were seen over a period of 5 years. Necessary information was extracted from the records.

Results: A total of 23 patients were seen. The majority of the participants were males (65.2%) and 87% were of the hemoglobin SC genotype. The mean age was 33.4 ± 8.7 years with a range of 18 to 60 years. About 78% were below the age of 35 years, however, most (60.9%) were within the age range of 26-35 years (table 1). Of all participants, 56.5% had tertiary education and 21.7% had secondary education. Varying grades of proliferative sickle cell retinopathy (PSCR) were present in all the patients. Less than half of the patients presented within three months (43.5%) of onset of symptoms. Blurring of vision (60.9%) and seeing of floaters (39.1%) were the commonest symptoms. About half (47.8%) of the presenting eyes had a visual acuity (VA) less than 3/60 at presentation and 70% of presenting eyes had grade 4 or 5 PSCR. Grade 3 PSCR was present in 39.1% of fellow eyes. The patients with tertiary education were more likely to present early ($p=0.048$). One

patient was bilaterally blind from PSCR. Loss of vision was due to PSCR in 95.6% of cases.

Discussion: HbSC genotype accounts for 87% of patients with retinopathy as seen in this study and this is similar to previous reports.¹⁻³ Most of the patients were between 26 and 35 years of age in this study. This is in agreement with previous studies.¹⁻³ Almost half of the patients seen in this study were blind at presentation as was reported by Oluleye.¹ Late presentation of these cases has been reported in previous studies^{1,4} and this was a similar finding in our study.

Conclusion: Most patients with SCR in this study presented within the age range of 26-35 years with stage 4 or 5 disease. Awareness on screening needs to be created among the patients and the physicians on the preventable nature of vision-threatening sickle cell retinopathy.

References

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Table 1: Age and gender of patients

		Age category (Years)				Total (%)
		15-25	26-35	36-45	>45	
Sex	Female	2	4	1	1	8 (34.8)
	Male	2	10	3	0	15 (65.2)
Total		4	14	4	1	23 (100)