

RECENT MODALITIES IN DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT OF CHRONIC PEDIATRIC UVEITIS

Essay

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INTRODUCTION

Uveitis is an inflammatory disorder involving inflammation of the uveal tract. It is classified as anterior, intermediate, posterior or panuveitis, depending on the part of eye affected by the inflammatory process.

In children, chronic uveitis is a relatively uncommon but serious disease, with the potential for significant long-term complications and possible blindness .Although frequently associated with an underlying systemic disease, e.g. juvenile idiopathic arthritis (JIA), a significant number of cases in children show no associated signs or symptoms, and are labelled as idiopathic .

In both very young and elderly patients, infections and neoplastic masquerade syndromes are relatively more common causes of uveitis than in other age groups .

There are differences between children and adults in the differential diagnosis and manifestations of uveitis that should be considered during evaluation . There may be a higher risk of some ocular complications such as uveitic glaucoma, and the presence of other unique complications, such as amblyopia, in young patients during follow-up .

The assessment includes visual acuity,external and motility evaluations, slit-lamp examination, intraocular pressure measurements, refraction, and fundus .Laboratory tests are performed according to the clinical presentation.

Recent ophthalmic investigations modalities are helpful in the diagnosis of pediatric uveitis.

Optical coherence tomography (OCT) is an imaging modality that allows high-resolution, cross-sectional imaging of the eye. It has been

shown to have significant role in various clinical situations. Anterior chamber (AC) cell grading has been reported with high-speed OCT in uveitis patients .

OCT can be utilized to assess all the parameters of inflammation, namely AC cells, keratic precipitates, fibrinous membrane, and endothelial infiltrates in eyes with clear and edematous cornea by manual and automated methods .

Cystoid macular edema (CME) is the cause of legal blindness in 8% of children with uveitis . OCT can be a useful adjunct to clinical biomicroscopy in the evaluation and treatment of pediatric uveitis-related CME .

Ultrasound biomicroscopy (UBM) is one of the new, non-invasive methods in the investigation of uveitis. The advantage of UBM is that it allows imaging of structures of the eye that cannot be seen otherwise. This technology allows quasi-histological sections of approximately 5 mm in depth to be obtained in vivo. It would be particularly helpful in cases with media opacities where it may guide the surgeon in choosing the optimal timing (i.e. inactive disease) for surgical intervention (e.g. cataract extraction).

Laser flare photometry provides an objective and quantitative, noninvasive, in vivo measurement that correlates with aqueous humor protein levels in the anterior chamber of the eye .

The first common step in treating non-infectious uveitis in children is topical application of corticosteroids. In case of failure to achieve remission and/or in the presence of complications and prognostic factors for visual loss, systemic corticosteroid administration in addition is usually required . When no quiescence is obtained, and/or in the case of reactivation and/or additional uveitis complications, the use of immunosuppressants is advocated as a second step. Among

immunosuppressants, methotrexate seems to be the first line steroid-sparing immunosuppressive approach, especially in patients with juvenile idiopathic arthritis. When no quiescence is obtained, or in the case of too-frequent flares usually more than 2–3/year—, a biological modifier drug can be used in addition to topical/systemic corticosteroids.

Immunomodulation therapy is increasingly being used in various ocular inflammatory diseases, to avoid the effects of long-term steroid and immunosuppressive therapy and to induce remission in chronic disease.

Urgent surgery may be necessary for vision-threatening complications, such as ciliary membrane formation with ciliary body detachment, retinal detachment, or uncontrolled elevations of intraocular pressure .

Gene therapy is a novel form of drug delivery that enlists the synthetic machinery of the patient's cells to produce a therapeutic agent is a very attractive therapeutic option, as it carries the promise of more or less permanently curing a clinical condition .

In conclusion, as our understanding of the critical checkpoints in the pathogenesis of autoimmune ocular disease improves, more and more potential intervention points and candidate therapeutic targets are identified, new technologies emerge, promising more specific and more easily applied therapies .

Key Words:

Pediatric uveitis, investigations, ultrasonography, UBM, OCT, fluorescein angiography, corticosteroids, immunosuppressive drugs, biological therapy.

Aim of Work

Is to review the literature about the recent modalities used in diagnosis of chronic pediatric uveitis, including laboratory tests and imaging techniques and the contribution of these methods to the final diagnosis and plan of management, together with the recent treatment modalities and the therapeutic approach to these cases.

ABSTRACT

Abstract :

Pediatric uveitis is relatively uncommon, but comprises a serious group of diseases that can lead to significant ocular morbidity and vision loss.

The diagnosis and management of chronic pediatric uveitis is a challenge to the ophthalmologist, and needs the integration of data obtained from history, clinical examination and ancillary laboratory and ophthalmic investigations.

The ophthalmic investigation modalities :ultrasonography,UBM,Fluorescein and ICG angiography,laser flare photometry and OCT have a role in the diagnosis and follow up of the disease .Tissue and ocular fluid specimens are sometimes necessary.These tissue samples undergo cytological and microbiologic examination as well as molecular techniques e.g PCR for detection of infectious or neoplastic etiology.

The treatment of chronic pediatric uveitis was initially dependent on corticosteroids, both topically and systemically. However, the side effects of long term steroid therapy in children, especially concerning growth, led to the emergence of other (steroid-sparing) immunosuppressive therapies and the newer biological modifier drugs that addresses specific components of the immune system.

Surgical treatment is required in many cases of pediatric uveitis with complications which can not be managed with medical treatment, the commonest being cataracts, glaucoma , band keratopathy and vitreoretinal complications. Specific preoperative, operative and postoperative precautions are required in these cases to minimize complications and improve the outcome.

Key words:

Pediatric uveitis , investigations , ultrasonography , UBM , OCT, fluorescein angiography , corticosteroids , immunosuppressive drugs , biological therapy.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE :

Basic Immunology And Immunophthology Of Uveitis.....13

Basic Immunology

The Immune Reflux Arc

Tolerance and Autoimmunity

Types of Immunopathogenic processes

Ocular Immune Privilege

Immunopathology of Uveitis

CHAPTER TWO:

Classification, Epidemiology And Causes Of Pediatric Uveitis.....36

Classification of Uveitis

Epidemiology

Causes of Pediatric Uveitis

Masquerade Syndromes

CHAPTER THREE :

Clinical Approach To Pediatric Uveitis.....47

Taking The History

The Ocular Examination

Extraocular Examination

Developing a Differential Diagnosis

Common Causes of Chronic Pediatric Uveitis

CHAPTER FOUR :

Investigations Of Chronic Pediatric Uveitis.....77

Laboratory Evaluation

Systemic Imaging Studies

Skin Testing

Ophthalmic Investigations

CHAPTER FIVE :

Treatment Of Chronic Pediatric Uveitis.....116

Treatment Of Noninfectious Chronic Uveitis

Treatment Of Infectious Chronic Uveitis

Surgical Treatment

Advances in the Treatment Of Noninfectious Chronic Uveitis

SUMMARY171

REFERENCES175

List Of Figures

Figure (1) :The immune response arc

Figure (2):Cellular immunity

Figure (3):Humoral immunity

Figure (4):Retinoblastoma with a pseudohypopyon and leucocoria

Figure (5):Juvenile Xanthogranuloma Masquerading as Pediatric Chronic Uveitis

Figure (6):Left: Illiterate E game,Right:HOTV test

Figure(7):Keratic precipitates in anterior uveitis.

Figure(8):Band keratopathy

Figure (9):Hypopyon in patient with severe HLA-B27 associated uveitis

Figure (10):Posterior synechiae with fibrin membrane and totally occluded pupil

Figure (11):Posterior subcapsular cataract in patient with chronic anterior uveitis

Figure(12): Binocular indirect ophthalmoscopic grading of vitreal haze

Figure (13):Retinal vascular sheathing

Figure(14): Active ocular toxoplasmosis with an adjacent chorioretinal scar

Figure (15):Fundus picture in the uveitic phase of Vogt-Koyanagi-Harada disease

Figure(16):Plain X-ray showing joint effusion in the right knee of a child with JIA

Figure (17):Posterior uveitis causing vitritis

Figure(18):Toxocariasis

Figure (19):Iritis and iridocyclitis. UBM

Figure (20):Ciliochoroidal effusion:

Figure(21):Chronic hypotony causing loss of ciliary body processes

Figure(22): UBM section showing a grade-1 pars planitis

Figure (23): Ocular toxocariasis in an 8-year-old boy

Figure(24):Toxoplasma lesion in fluorescein angiography in the right eye

Figure(25):Fluorescein angiography of multifocal choroiditis in a 14 year old girl

Figure (26):Cystoid macular edema

Figure(27):a) Schematic interpretation of indocyanine green angiography hypofluorescence; (b) Schematic interpretation of indocyanine green angiography hypofluorescence

Figure (28):Fundus and autofluorescence images of the right eye of a child with multifocal choroiditis

Figure (29): OCT illustrations of left eye of a 9 year old girl with uveitis associated with juvenile idiopathic arthritis complicated with cystoid macular edema

Figure(30): OCT demonstrates zone of vitreo-macular traction with tenting of the fovea and resultant visual loss

Figure (31):Comparison between Time domain and Cirrus HD OCT in a case of sympathetic ophthalmia

Figure (32) :Postoperative uveitis with corneal edema

Figure(33):Flucinolone implant(retisert)

Figure(34):Dexamethasone intravitreal implant and injector.

List Of Tables

Table (1):HLA association with ocular inflammatory diseases

Table(2):The SUN working group anatomical classification of uveitis

Table (3):SUN Classification of uveitis according to onset and course

Table(4):History taking in a case of uveitis

Table (5): Grading of anterior chamber cells:The SUN Working Group
Grading Scheme for Anterior Chamber Cells

Table (6): Grading of anterior chamber flare The SUN* Working Group
Grading Scheme for Anterior Chamber Flare

Table (7):The SUN Working Group Activity of Uveitis Terminology

Table (8) Grading of Vitreous Haze Through the Binocular Indirect
Ophthalmoscope (BIO SCORE)

Table (8):Developing a differential diagnosis for a case of uveitis

Table(9):Diagnostic categories of JIA according to the ILAR criteria

Table(11): American Academy of Pediatrics Recommendations for
Screening Patients With JRA for Uveitis