Central retinal vein thrombosis: case report

A 50-year-old woman developed central retinal vein thrombosis after receiving interferon for chronic hepatitis C.

The woman presented to an eye clinic with a 5-day history of sudden-onset painless loss of vision in the right eye 2 days after completing a 6-month course of ribavirin and interferon [route and dosage not stated]. On examination, the visual acuity in her right eye was limited to hand movement only with no improvement on pin hole. Her left eye was normal. Her right pupil demonstrated a relative afferent pupillary defect, while her left pupil reacted normally. Fundus examination was normal in the left eye, while in the right eye a hyperaemic and swollen disc was observed, with haemorrhage spilling all around it. Macular oedema with cotton wool spots was evident. These findings were compatible with complete right central retinal vein occlusion with ischaemic retinopathy.

The woman was referred to the medical department, where tests showed normal blood glucose levels. Other blood tests were normal, except for high cholesterol levels. She was prescribed statin therapy and also initiated on aspirin and heparin. Four weeks later, an eye examination revealed a deterioration with complete vision loss in the right eye. Fundus examination demonstrated disc fibrosis with fibrous vessels surrounding the disc.

Author comment: "This case illustrates the possibility of unpredictable and sight losing complication of interferon".

Nazir L. et al. Interferon-induced central retinal vein thrombosis. Journal of the College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan 22: 735-736, No. 11, Nov 2012 - Pakistan