



THE OCULAR IMMUNOLOGY
AND UVEITIS FOUNDATION

Dedicated to Eye Disease Cure and Education

Characteristics of Uveitis Presenting for the First Time in the Elderly

C. Stephen Foster, M.D.

OBJECTIVE: This study is aimed to describe the clinical characteristics of uveitis presenting de novo in the elderly.

DESIGN: The study design was a description of a retrospectively identified case series.

PARTICIPANTS: A population of 138 patients (209 eyes) with uveitis beginning after age 60 was analyzed.

RESULTS: Uveitis in the elderly accounted for 10.4% of the authors' uveitis population. The localization of uveitis was anterior in 56.5% of patients, intermediate uveitis was diagnosed in two patients (1.4%), posterior uveitis was found in 25.4%, while 16.7% of patients presented with panuveitis. Idiopathic uveitis accounted for the majority of cases (31.2%), whereas herpes zoster ophthalmicus (11.6%), herpes simplex virus (6.5%), presumed sarcoidosis (5.8%), syphilis (4.3%), and birdshot chorioretinopathy (3.6%) were the most frequent specific diagnostic entities. Secondary elevation of intraocular pressure was common (67 eyes, or 32%). The development of macular edema complicated 28.7% of cases (60 eyes). Two cases of intraocular lymphoma were identified in 19 diagnostic vitreous biopsy specimens. Fifty-two percent of eyes retained visual acuity of 20/40 or more; 32.6% had final visual acuity worse than 20/100.

CONCLUSIONS: Uveitis presenting for the first time in the elderly is not uncommon. Idiopathic uveitis accounts for the majority of cases, and herpes zoster ophthalmicus and herpes simplex virus are particularly prevalent. Intraocular lymphoma does not predominate in this age group. With adequate control of intraocular inflammation and its sequelae, the visual prognosis in patients in this age group with uveitis is relatively good.