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Sir,
**Tailoring pan-retinal photocoagulation for the
haemianopic patient**

Numerous studies have showed the effect of panretinal photocoagulation (PRP) on the patients' field of vision.^{1–3} Cerebro-vascular accidents (CVA) are often associated

with diabetes,⁴ and they commonly cause visual field defects.⁵ We report the case of a diabetic patient with proliferative diabetic retinopathy (PDR), who had had a stroke causing a homonymous haemianopia — and the manner in which he was treated, to conserve as much of his visual field as possible.

Case report

A 26-year-old male type I diabetic was referred to the eye clinic. He had a stroke causing a right homonymous haemianopia when he was 15 years old (Figure 1). On examination he had disc neovascularisation in the left eye and had scattered PRP to the temporal retina respecting the vertical midline. Heavier more confluent burns than usual were placed to this area of 'nonseeing' retina to attempt to spare the preserved visual field. The new vessels regressed following treatment. After 10 months, he developed further neovascularisation and had more PRP to the temporal retina of the left eye. He then had PRP to the nasal retina of the right eye (respecting the vertical midline) for new vessels elsewhere. Additional laser was applied to the temporal right retina, and nasal left retina, but was placed very sparsely to preserve as much as possible of his residual visual fields. The new vessels have regressed in both eyes following treatment, and we have managed to conserve the visual field unaffected by the stroke.

Comment

The Diabetic Retinopathy Study¹ and the Early Photocoagulation for Diabetic Retinopathy study² have clearly demonstrated the benefit of treating proliferative diabetic retinopathy to reduce the risk of severe visual loss. Visual field constriction is a well-recognized side

Figure 1 Goldmann's visual field showing a right homonymous haemianopia.

Figure 2 Distribution of laser spots treating the 'nonseeing' retina affected by the homonymous haemianopia.

effect of PRP. Heavy confluent burns or retreatment over previously treated areas, are more likely to have a detrimental effect on peripheral vision.³

Adequate control of patients' proliferative disease is of vital importance to prevent blindness. However, in a patient with a pre-existing visual field defect, treatment should be aimed not only at controlling the neovascular process but also at preserving the remaining functional visual field. We have been able to achieve this, by treating this patient's haemianopic field with significant confluent burns and avoiding the field of vision unaffected by the CVA. We therefore recommend applying PRP initially to areas of visual field loss (Figure 2). Obviously, if the angiogenic stimulus from the nontreated retina induces further new vessel formation, patients will require PRP to previously untreated areas. To the best of our knowledge, the tailoring of PRP for haemianopic patients has not been described in the past.

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Sir, Risk of solar retinopathy: evaluation of newspaper warnings prior to the 2004 Transit of Venus

On June 8, 2004, millions of people in Europe, Africa, and Middle East observed the Transit of Venus, when earth's closest planetary neighbour edged across the sun's disc over a period of 6 h.

Those who observe the sun directly risk permanent damage to their sight through solar retinopathy.^{1,2} Thermal damage to foveal photoreceptors may cause a small defect in the centre of the visual field.³ No treatment has been shown to be effective.² A preventative strategy by increasing public awareness of the risk of sun-gazing has been shown to be effective in reducing the risk of solar retinopathy during eclipses.^{2,4}

We looked at newspapers to see whether they carried a warning about the dangers of sun-gazing. We surveyed 57 national and local titles from the United Kingdom (UK), evening newspapers from the 7th and morning newspapers on the 8th of June 2004 (Table 1).

Of the 23 UK newspapers which mentioned this solar event, only eight (33%) stated that it is dangerous to look directly at the sun, and only five (18%) suggested a safe alternative.

When drawing public attention to solar events, newspapers and other mass media must also give a specific warning that it is dangerous to look directly at the sun. They should suggest a safe method for observing