

care for these patients removes time available for eye care professionals to dedicate to Vision 2020 goals. Evans's article focused on HIV-related superinfection; the conflicting evidence regarding conjunctival squamous neoplasia's association with human papilloma virus infection at least merits its inclusion.^{2,3}

Unlike Herpes Zoster, conjunctival SCC is not featured in WHO staging of AIDS used to consider eligibility for antiretroviral therapy in Malawi.⁴ With a limited supply of antiretroviral drugs currently now available, there is an urgent need for research into the contribution conjunctival SCC could, or should make to the WHO staging, as well as the best preventative and therapeutic interventions for it in this setting.

References

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Eye (2006) **20**, 1414–1415. doi:10.1038/sj.eye.6702271;
published online 3 February 2006

Sir,
Response to Beare *et al*

I am grateful to Beare and Batumba for drawing attention to my failure to include squamous cell carcinoma (SCC)

of the conjunctiva in my short article. I concentrated on super-infection as that was the subject I was given for my lecture and hence formed the basis of the article. Despite this it seems likely that SCC, given the much higher increased risk in HIV-positive people, is associated with an oncogenic infection in addition to ultraviolet radiation and immunosuppression. If this is true, then SCC would be a disease similar to Kaposi's sarcoma and anal neoplasia in being increased in HIV-positive people and associated with specific infections (HHV8 for KS and HPV for anal carcinoma).

However, I feel that the perspective of SCC as gained from a specialist Eye Hospital will give a somewhat biased view of how common SCC is. Morgan *et al*¹ when describing ophthalmological complications in the MRC Ugandan cohort concludes that although ocular complications of AIDS seem to comprise a large extra element in the work-load of tertiary care hospitals dealing with eye problems, on a population basis such cases are infrequent. Even Newton *et al*² in their comprehensive paper acknowledge that in Uganda, SCC is not a particularly common manifestation of HIV disease but they estimated that HIV accounts for around 60% of the population attributable fraction of SCC.

However, I should have drawn attention to SCC, even if just to acknowledge that as yet we do not know whether it is caused by a super-infection. I am therefore grateful that omission has been corrected by these letters.

References

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Eye (2006) **20**, 1415. doi:10.1038/sj.eye.6702273;
published online 10 February 2006