Thesis soul and losing such a sense

Thesis statement

In this day and age, majority of individuals tend to pay close attention to their health unlike how it was in the past.

One of the major values that a person holds in regards to their body and health is eyesight. It is said that eyes are the window to the soul and losing such a sense would be traumatizing.

Introduction

Statistics have shown that 2 percent cases of blindness in people over the age of forty can be attributed to Glaucoma. It becomes even more common as age progresses. Glaucoma occurs as an eye condition which leads to damage of the optic nerve.

It is caused by pressure build up in the eye. This pressure causes fluid to form at the back of the eye, which later comes out of the eye as tears. Dirt that might cause blockage of the flow of fluid from the eye can easily cause the rise of pressure in the eye, thereby leading to risk of contracting glaucoma (Marshall Cavendish Corporation, 2007).

Not everyone is immune to glaucoma, but some people are more likely than others to fall prey to the disease. People over the age of forty are the most likely to get glaucoma. This is simply because the eyes' drainage systems, just like other bodily systems, seem to become less efficient as people grow older.

Causes of Glaucoma

Glaucoma is usually caused by common occurrences.

These include toxin build up, slow metabolic rates as a result of aging, high blood pressure, use of some prescription drugs, such as amphetamines, certain illnesses such as other eye disorders, and diabetes, nutritional deficiency, and finally, heredity (Favlo, 2005).

Types of Glaucoma

Primary Open-Angle Glaucoma

This type is the most common, occurring in about 1% of the population aged 50 years and above. When the inflow of aqueous humor into the eye exceeds the outflow, the amounts of aqueous humor in the eye becomes too much, resulting to pressure build up in the eye. This type of glaucoma progresses slowly over the years. No symptoms occur until the optic nerve is severely damaged, causing visual impairment (Marshall Cavendish Corporation, 2007).

At this point, the harm is irreversible. At first there is loss of side vision, such that a person can only see straight ahead. This step is often gradual and individuals are unaware of the problem until the condition advances completely. If untreated, vision decreases slowly until all vision is lost. Symptom Most patients with this type of glaucoma show no symptoms. The disease can only be detected at a routine eye check before the patient notices loss of sight. The signs however, noted in a person with this type of glaucoma are such as narrowing of the side vision, mild headaches, vague visual disturbances, and seeing only straight ahead.

Acute Closed-Angle Glaucoma

This type develops faster than other types of glaucoma.

It results from a sudden blockage of the Schlemm canal, such that aqueous humor accumulates rapidly in the eye. Although this type of glaucoma is less common, it is a medical emergency and must be treated immediately to avert blindness from occurring. (Marshall Cavendish Corporation, 2007). Symptoms Symptoms can easily be noted, unlike in other cases of glaucoma. A person usually has a semi-dilated oval pupil, which is caused by the damage the intra-ocular pressure inflicts on the iris, thereby affecting the pupil, corneal edema with resulting poor visual activity, shallow anterior chamber, and the eyeball getting tender.

Secondary Glaucoma

Any condition which involves debris/dirt in the aqueous can cause secondary glaucoma. Some injuries which might cause harm to the eye, can also cause glaucoma.

Certain diseases and/or their treatment may cause glaucoma, such as leukemia and sickle-cell disease. Finally, some drugs such as amphetamines and anti depressants may cause build up of pressure during use. Symptoms Symptoms of this type of glaucoma are usually not easily seen at first, whether visually or physically. Visual symptoms do not occur until the later stage. High levels of intra ocular pressure can cause pain, vomiting, colored halos around lights, and blurry vision.

Congenital or Developmental Glaucoma

This occurs when an abnormality present at birth produces an intra-ocular pressure rise. It is extremely rare, and is often inherited.

Children born with raised intra-ocular pressure have a lower chance of surviving the condition than those in whom pressure rise does not occur until after the first few months of their lives (Favlo, 2005) Symptoms Children with this type of glaucoma experience tearing, photo-phobia, and frequent rub the eyes. Here, an enlarged eye, myopia, and cornea clouding due to edema may be noticed.

Prevention and Treatment

Recent research has availed measures for glaucoma prevention. Investigations have shown that drugs applied to the eye, aimed at reducing intra-ocular pressure in individuals who were earlier prone to developing the disease, reduced by 50%, the chance of them getting the disease. With such preventive measures at everyone’s disposal, screening for glaucoma has become increasingly important and now people can buy a testing kit to measure their intra-ocular pressure (Marshall Cavendish Corporation, 2007).

Treatment

Most treatments are aimed at bringing down the pressure levels in the eye, so as to prevent or reduce further damage to the eye. Each year, glaucoma patients should undergo two to four examinations to measure visual activity, the optic disk, and eye pressure.

The visual field test and other tests should also be done frequently, to establish the stability of the disease or to note deterioration, which requires more effective treatment. This ongoing monitoring is important in order to preserve vision in people with glaucoma (Harvard Health Publications, 2005). Eye drops, and other drugs are often prescribed to patients of glaucoma,

aiming at reducing the pressure in the eyes. A disadvantage of these drugs is that they may have to be taken regularly for life. If medication does not work, laser surgery can be used to clear out the mesh work of drainage canals, in-activate part of the tissue that produces aqueous humor, or open a new hole in the iris. A technique called selective laser trabeculoplasty uses a low energy laser to make very small holes to clogged drainage canals. Because it causes very little damage, the procedure can be used repeatedly.

Non laser microsurgery is also used, for example, to make a tiny opening in the eye so liquid can drain out. Where necessary, a tube can also be implanted in front of the iris to provide an alternate drainage route. Surgery is at times accompanied by irritation, infection, bleeding of formation of scars, which can at times be dealt with treatment using some drugs. Recent research has also shown that cholesterol-reducing drugs (statins) may also protect against glaucoma.

Conclusion

Glaucoma can only be controlled because there is yet a cure to be discovered for the disease. No treatment can restore vision lost to the damage of glaucoma, but it is possible to stop the progression of the disease. This therefore requires one to be frequently undergoing eye check ups, especially for the old people, not only when one is sick, but also to ensure that one does not fall prey to this disease.

References

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