

Diabetes Retinopathy: An Often Undermined Complication

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Background

In Campania region there are approximately 460000 patients at risk of blindness due to complications of diabetes. Manifestations of diabetic retinopathy include microaneurysms, intraretinal hemorrhage, exudates, macular edema, macular ischaemia, neovascularization, vitreous hemorrhage, and tractional retinal detachment. Early diagnosis and management of patients with diabetic retinopathy are essential to saving sight. It is important to raise awareness among people with diabetes of the importance of going to the ophthalmologist, even in the absence of symptoms, to carry out an examination of the fundus of the eye.

Materials and Methods

On July 5th 2024, the Diabetology Unit and the Ophtalmology Unit of Monaldi Hospital organized an awareness and prevention campaign day for diabetic maculopathy entitled "Diabetes, let's keep an eye on it". We selected 65 type 2 diabetic patients with retinopathy. Patients usually performed eye exam every year and were chosen with a diagnosis of background retinopathy in the last year.

Results

We performed 55 eye exams to 30 male and 25 female T2D patients. Mean age was 56+7, HbA1c 7.1+0.9; 10% of all pts suffered from heart failure, 78% suffered from blood hypertension, 39% was hypercholesterolemic. Despite their routinary yearly eye visits patients showed: 23% microaneurysms, 10% macular ischaemia, 16% neovascularization, 7% tractional retinal detachment, never observed in previous check ups.

Discussion

Despite doctor prescriptions, patients tend to neglect their sight check ups, skipping them at least until the disease has caused significant damage when it is more difficult to intervene on. To reverse this trend, it is therefore essential to carry out information and awareness campaigns that give patients with diabetes the opportunity to learn about the risks linked to the onset of retinopathy and the importance of prevention".

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