

Ectopic cilia: A rare entity

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Abstract

Ectopic cilia are rare in human. Only few cases have been reported till now. We report first case of ectopic cilia from Garhwal region of Uttarakhand, India. Our case was a 10 year old boy, having ectopic cilia on the palpebral conjunctiva of left upper lid.

Keywords: Ectopic, cilia, human.

Introduction

Normally, cilia are found at the eyelid margin. Ectopic cilia are one or more lash follicles appearing in an abnormal position in the eyelid. It is very rare condition. We report a case of a 10 year old male child presenting with this condition of ectopic cilia in the palpebral conjunctiva of left upper eyelid.

Case Report

A 10 year old male child presented in pediatric ophthalmology Out Patient Department of a tertiary care teaching hospital with complaint of hair follicle on the conjunctival side of the left upper eyelid. This was associated with redness and itching for last 2 years. Patient had not taken any treatment for this so far. The vision in both eyes was 6/6 on the snellen's chart. Slit lamp examination demonstrated two hair follicles on the same site over the left palpebral conjunctiva, seen on eversion of the upper eyelid. Vernal conjunctivitis was present in both eyes. Rest of the anterior and posterior segment was Within Normal Limits. There was no family history of similar complaints. The patient had no history of any ocular surgery or trauma. Patient was advised surgical removal of cilia but refused. The ectopic cilia were epilated and topical treatment for vernal conjunctivitis was started.



Discussion

Weigmann reported first case of ectopic cilia almost 80 years back in 1936.⁽¹⁾ There are only few case reports of ectopic cilia since then. Till 2004, ten cases of ectopic cilia were reported.⁽²⁾ Barot reviewed the literature on ectopic cilia recently in 2014 and reported only 22 cases

of ectopic cilia in previous literature.⁽³⁾ Ectopic cilia, when found on anterior surface of lid, are congenital. On the other hand, ectopic cilia, when occur on posterior surface of the lid i.e. palpebral conjunctiva, are acquired.⁽⁴⁾ The origin of ectopic cilia is not well understood. MacQuillan et al proposed origin of ectopic cilia on anterior surface of lid due to problem in interaction between ectoderm and mesoderm during development.⁽²⁾ Hase et al proposed origin of ectopic cilia in palpebral conjunctiva as acquired. They reported 2 cases of ectopic cilia on palpebral conjunctiva. They excised these hair and did the histopathological examination. In both the cases they did not find dermal papillae and hair matrixes, which produce hair follicles, in the excised tissue. They concluded that ectopic cilia in the palpebral conjunctiva were not originated in palpebral conjunctiva, but these cilia might have originated as normal cilia on its normal place i.e. lid margin and later on migrated spontaneously to palpebral conjunctiva.⁽⁴⁾

Ectopic cilia should not be confused with cilia inversum in which a lash grows inwards away from the lid margin.⁽⁵⁾

This case is the first reported case of ectopic cilia in Garhwal region of Uttarakhand, India. Texture of the cilia along with proximity to lid margin reinforces the theory of acquired origin of these cilia as suggested by Hase et al.

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