

Anterior Segment

ATYPICAL BILATERAL CONJUNCTIVAL NODULES AS INITIAL PRESENTATION OF A SMALL LYMPHOCYTIC LYMPHOMA

Júlio Almeida¹, Tomás Costa¹, Maria Vivas¹, Catarina Monteiro¹, Fernando T. Vaz¹,
Mara Ferreira¹, Ana Carolina Freitas², Isabel Prieto¹

¹*Ophthalmology, Prof. Doutor Fernando Fonseca Hospital, Portugal*

²*Hematology, Instituto Português De Oncologia De Lisboa Francisco Gentil,
Portugal*

PURPOSE: To report a case of bilateral conjunctival nodules as an initial presentation of a small lymphocytic lymphoma (SLL) in a middle-aged patient.

METHODS: Chronic lymphocytic leukemia is the most common leukemia in western countries and the term SLL refers to its manifestation in the lymph nodes or other organs. Ocular involvement is rare, but the conjunctiva is one of the critical extra-nodal sites in the eye for lymphoma development. We present a case of a 51-year-old female with bipolar disease who initially came to our emergency department complaining of ocular discomfort and redness in the left eye for a month.

RESULTS: On biomicroscopy, the temporal conjunctiva had multi-nodular hyperemia resembling nodular episcleritis. The rest of the ocular exam and the other eye were unremarkable. She was treated accordingly and started an initial screening which raised suspicion for ocular sarcoidosis after an elevated lysozyme and angiotensin-converting enzyme. Further investigation, including an incisional biopsy, excluded the diagnosis. Ten months later, she reported new similar conjunctival findings bilaterally. A second biopsy was performed and revealed infiltration by small B lymphocytes CD20+, CD5+, and CD23+, suggestive of SLL. The staging exams did not reveal systemic activity, but ocular symptoms returned, and systemic treatment was planned.

CONCLUSIONS: This case aims to highlight an exceptional ocular manifestation of SLL. Due to its unspecific presentation, conjunctival nodules can mimic other pathologies. It's important to pursue an investigation in these atypical cases. Treatment is only initiated if there is an active or symptomatic disease.

FINANCIAL DISCLOSE: None