

Title: The Midland Ophthalmic Society: 'Headaches for Ophthalmologists'

Date: Friday 7th October 2016

Venue: Edgbaston Priory Club, Sir Harry's Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham

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Ophthalmologists are often the first to evaluate patients with headaches, eye pain and headache-associated visual disturbances. Distinguishing benign headaches from those associated with neurological and medical emergencies can be challenging. This intensive symposium was designed by Miss Susan Mollan, Consultant Neuro-ophthalmologist at University Hospitals Birmingham (UHB), to provide the practising Ophthalmologist with a comprehensive and up-to-date practical guide in the diagnosis and management of headache.

Starting the day was the trainee research presentations competition for the award of the MOS travel bursary. This was followed by a presentation by the 2015 junior ophthalmologist prize winner.

The headache symposium opened with a comprehensive lecture delivered by Julie Edwards, headache nurse specialist, on how to take a thorough headache history. This was followed by an entertaining and interactive lecture by Mr Brendan Davis, Consultant Headache Specialist, University Hospitals of North Midlands, on common headaches. Dr Davis included interesting video case presentations of pituitary apoplexy, venous sinus thrombosis, carotid dissection and migraine.

Dr Alex Sinclair, Consultant Headache Specialist, UHB, discussed the management of medication overuse and chronic daily headache. Medication overuse headache is a significant problem which can complicate any pre-existing headache disorder or can occur in patients using analgesia for non-headache related purposes. These debilitating headaches can be precipitated by the use of any analgesic on more than two days per week for more than three months.

Dr Sinclair included a comprehensive overview of headache management including medical management based on the NICE Guidelines, the use of botulinum toxin A in chronic migraine, and techniques such as greater occipital nerve block and neurostimulation.

This was followed by a synopsis of cluster headache and other trigeminal autonomic cephalalgias by Mr Tim Matthews, Consultant Neuro-ophthalmologist, UHB. He discussed paroxysmal hemicranias, short lasting unilateral neuralgiform headache with conjunctival injection and tearing (SUNCT), short lasting unilateral neuralgiform headache attacks with cranial autonomic features (SUNA) and hemicranias continua.

To conclude the headache symposium, two lectures on serious causes of headaches, presenting to eye clinic in the under 50s and over 50s were given by Miss Lidia Alvarez, Consultant Neuro-ophthalmologist Birmingham and Midland Eye Centre and Miss Sri Sharma, Consultant Neuro-ophthalmologist Oxford Eye Hospital, respectively.

The Middlemore Lecture, in memory of Richard Middlemore (1804-1891), was delivered by Professor Yit Yang. Professor Yang discussed the multiple roles of Muller cells; vitreoretinal adhesion, directing light on to the fovea (describing how the Muller cell cone acts as a light pipe), the storage of lutein to block blue and UV light, changes in the Muller cells in Macula Telangiectasia Type II and changes in the early or intracellular phase of macula oedema.

The MOS meeting was very successful, providing a good overview of common headache conditions, their investigation and management.



Inauguration of the new MOS president, Mr Jalil Al-Ibrahim, who takes over from Mrs Rosemary Robinson.



The Middlemore Lecture was given by Professor Yit Yang.



The MOS travel bursary was awarded to Miss Rupal Morjaria for her research on the impact of anophthalmia on circadian rhythms. Light is an important time cue to help entrain the sleep/wake cycle. The study found that anophthalmia causes considerable sleep disruption and in turn affects mood, and can cause anxiety and depression.

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