Ocular Trauma: Most under estimated and under reported ocular morbidity

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Dear Friends,
Season's greetings!!

It is indeed a pleasure for me to write on a challenging subject, Ocular Trauma. In this era of modern technology, rapid industrialization, high speed traffic with increasing incidence of accidents and intentional assaults, the incidence of ocular trauma has been on the increase and now it is one of the principle cause of unilateral, acquired blindness. It has been reported that more than 500,000 blinding eye injuries occur annually worldwide. Approximately 1.6 million people are blind due to trauma and 2.3 million bilaterally visually impaired[1,2]. In Indian context, injury as a cause of blindness constitutes 1.5% of total cases[3]. Reported incidence of ocular trauma in India is on lower side as compared to western countries, because of less reporting of cases from rural India. Major responsible factors seems lack of education, transport and awareness. Trauma can result in wide spectrum of tissue damage of globe, optic nerve and ocular adnexae and varying severity ranging from minor to severe vision loss.

Management of ocular trauma is a challenging task particularly in pediatric age group. It requires multispecialty approach involving team of anterior segment, posterior segment specialist, orbit and oculoplastic surgeons and maxillofacial and neurosurgeons. Although prognosis in sever ocular trauma remains quite guarded, however, due to availability of newer investigation modalities like USG, CT Scan, MRI and OCT, recent advances in microsurgery instruments, suture materials and new vitreoretinal techniques, many eyes can be salvaged to a great extent. Early intervention is highly desirable to reduce ocular morbidity. BETT'S and Ocular Trauma Classification Group has developed newer classification of mechanical ocular trauma which is uniform in nature and helps in accurate transmission of clinical data, facilitating to delivery of optimal eye care and analysis of efficacy of intervention[4,5]. Ocular Trauma Score (OTS) is a valuable tool for objective calculation of functional prognosis in severe mechanical trauma[6,7].

80-90% of ocular trauma are preventable. There is great need to formulate preventive strategies, to introduce improved and effective preventive devices, making effective regulations and strict implementation of law to save the eye. It is also important to create wide awareness through media in people, regarding hazards of ocular trauma and importance of preventive measures.

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