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Service (sector) Cornea and External Disease N° CEP

New onset of herpes simplex virus epithelial keratitis following penetrating keratoplasty

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Purpose: To report a series of patients with no previous history of herpes simplex virus (HSV) infection, who had new onset of herpetic keratitis following penetrating keratoplasty (PK). Methods: Retrospective case series. We included in the study the patients who had new onset of herpetic keratitis following penetrating keratoplasty for corneal diseases unrelated to HSV infection who were seen at the Cornea Service at Wills Eye Hospital (Philadelphia, PA, U.S.A) from January 1996 to December 2002. The diagnosis of HSV epithelial keratitis was based on clinical characteristics of either a classic herpetic dendrite, a geographic ulcer or a non-healing epithelial defect that responded only to antiviral therapy. Results: Fourteen patients were included in the study. Eight of these (57.1%) had presented with a geographic ulcer while 6 patients (42.8%) had a classic dendrite. The most common primary corneal disease that led to PK was pseudophakic bullous keratopathy (35.7%), followed by keratoconus (28.6%), Fuchs dystrophy (21.4%) and corneal scar unrelated to HSV (14.3%). Conclusion: The ophthalmologist should be aware of the possibility of herpetic keratitis in eyes following PK, even in patients with no previous history of HSV infection.