

Abstract

Background: Glaucoma is a characteristic optic neuropathy which typically results in specific patterns of progressive visual field loss and whose most important risk factor is raised intraocular pressure (IOP). It is second to cataract as a leading cause of global blindness and is the leading cause of irreversible visual loss. In Kenya it is ranked third after cataract and trachoma. Previous population and hospital based studies have shown patients to have very poor levels of knowledge on their condition. This has not been verified in our setting as no study on the levels of knowledge in glaucoma patients have been done in Kenya to date.

Results: We interviewed 78 patients, 47(60%) were male and 31(40%) were female. Age ranged from 19-89 years with a mean age of 61.1 (SD +11.5) years. Fifty three (67.9%) patients were classified as having some knowledge using a predefined classification system. Patients had wrong expectation of both treatment and surgery with 29.5% and 32.5% expecting cure from medical and surgical treatment respectively.

Conclusion: There is still a wide gap in knowledge that exists and that needs to be addressed through counseling and further patient education