Nijeryalı Bir Kadın Hastada Viral Konjüktivit Vakasında Kendi Kendine İdrar Tedavisi

[Self Urine Therapy in a Case of Viral Conjunctivitis in a Nigerian Female Patient]

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Dear Sir,

We report a case of instillation of urine into the left eye for therapeutic purpose in a 20 year old Nigerian female patient who had viral conjunctivitis. The patient presented to the Eye Centre of Federal Medical Centre, Owo, Ondo State, Nigeria in May, 2011 on account of redness of the left eye with associated discharge which started a week prior to presentation. The patient had earlier had a similar complaint in her right eye which had subsided at presentation following use of topical antibiotics bought off counter. In a bid to hasten the resolution of the conjunctivitis, patient applied her own urine to the left eye thrice a day for three days and this worsened the state of the eye with associated photophobia and this prompted her to present. The visual acuity was 6/9 and 6/12 in the right eye and left eye respectively. Ocular examination revealed normal anterior and posterior segment in the right eye. However on the left eye, patient had swollen lids, purulent discharge, conjunctiva chemosis and hyperemia. The cornea was clear and the posterior segment was normal (Figure 1). The patient was placed on Tabs ciprofloxacin 500mg bid for five days, Gutt. and Oc. chloramphenicol. This intervention led to resolution of the ocular complaint within a week and the patient was counseled on the dangers inherent in traditional eye care. She was strongly advised against urine therapy.

Urine therapy or urotherapy is a form of alternative medicine in which human urine is applied in different ways for medicinal or cosmetic purposes. The ways of application of urine include drinking of one’s own urine and massaging of skin with urine. The use of urine to treat eye disease is as old as medical history. (1) Though urine therapy is an ancient practice, it is still practised by some people most especially in rural communities. This unhealthy practice could be associated with attendant ocular complications like cornea melting and endophthalmitis. There is no known scientifically proven benefits derived from use of human urine for therapeutic purposes. (2,3) Urea in urine is antibacterial to bacteria causing urinary tract infection and ingestion of urea increases antibacterial activity in urine, though there is no evidence of such proven benefits upon actual ingestion or application of human urine. In view of complications arising from traditional eye medication, there is an urgent need to discourage this practice most especially urine therapy.

Ophthalmologists should enlighten the populace about the dangers inherent in traditional eye care. Constructive engagement of traditional healers by ophthalmologists would also go a long way to stem the tide of complications arising from traditional eye care most especially in developing world.

REFERENCES


**Figure 1**: The left eye showing diffuse conjunctiva hyperemia and chemosis following urine therapy.