Bloody Tears from an Orbital Varix

G. Bonavolontà  
A. Sammartino

Clinica oculistica (Direttore: Prof. A. Bonavolontà), Cattedra di Ottica Fisiologica (Direttore: Prof. M. D’Esposito), II. Facoltà di medicina e chirurgia, Università degli studi di Napoli, Italia

Key Words
Bloody tears  
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Abstract
The authors describe a case of ‘bloody tears’ associated with an intraorbital varix in a 29-year-old woman who also had mild disturbances of coagulation.

Alfredo Sammartino, MD, Clinica oculistica, II. Policlinico, Napoli (Italy)

Introduction
‘Bloody tears’ are extremely rare. In a review of the literature in 1973, Banta and Seltzer discuss 25 cases with ‘bloody tears’ due to various causes. There do not appear to have been any further case reports since then. We report an interesting case of ‘bloody tears’ in the presence of an intraorbital varix, an association which has not been reported previously.

Case Report
Fig. 1. Right ophthalmic varix, made more evident by compression of the dorsum of the nose.
This 29-year-old woman was admitted to our hospital on the 1st of February 1978 for investigation of a vascular tumor at the upper, inner angle of the right eye, which had first become apparent 5 years previously. In the last 2 years it had increased in size and several times each week there had been bleeding from the fornices of the conjunctiva and from the medial periorbital tissue.

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revealing a large varix lying immediately below the skin. The afferent vessels were ligated and the varix was excised. The postoperative course was uneventful.

Discussion

In our patient ‘bloody tears’ were associated with a varix and with mild disturbances of coagulation; the change combination of these two was probably the cause of the phenomenon.

Resume

Les auteurs décrivent un cas de «larmes de sang» associées à des varices intraorbitales chez une jeune femme de 29 ans souffrant d’un léger trouble de la coagulation. Le changement combiné de ces deux éléments était probablement la cause de l’effet. 

Zusammenfassung


On examination there was a varix, 15×10 cm, of the right angular vein, made more evident by compression of the dorsum of the nose (fig. 1). The varix increased in size after jugular compression (fig. 2) and after a few minutes there was copious transudation of blood, both from the medial conjunctiva and from the skin overlying the tumor (fig. 3). There were no other abnormal ophthalmological findings and the only abnormalities on laboratory investigation were mild trombocytopenia and a slightly prolonged bleeding time.
Phlebography demonstrated a large varix on the right, lying at the junction between the superior ophthalmic vein and the angular vein. At operation on the 22nd of February, 1979, the upper, inner quadrant of the orbit was opened.

References