Images in medicine

Amiodarone-induced cornea verticillata

A 71-year-old man was treated for recurrent ventricular tachycardia with 200 mg amiodarone daily for 15 months. During therapy, golden-grey deposits appeared in a vortex fashion in the corneal epithelium of both eyes just below the central cornea. His visual acuity had also decreased during the last 2 years from 20/20 to 20/30, accompanied by an altered colour perception, glare and blurring. We was referred to our clinic to see whether these changes could be attributed to the corneal deposits. Examination revealed opacity of both lenses and the described corneal findings. A diagnosis of bilateral senile cataract and cornea verticillata was made. After removal of the cataracts, visual acuity improved and visual symptoms disappeared; the corneal changes have remained stable under amiodarone therapy for the last 2 years (figure).

Corneal deposits may be observed in 70–100% of patients under amiodarone treatment but do not usually threaten vision or antibodies or organ-specific autoantibodies (paraneoplastic SMS).


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Photograph by Hans Künzli

need routine ophthalmologic surveillance.

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