



The underestimated emergency: Neglected squamous cell carcinoma in a young woman

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I. INTRODUCTION

Squamous cell carcinoma of the conjunctiva is an uncommon malignancy, frequently unrecognized and liable to cause delays in diagnosis and treatment. It is essential to consider this possibility in the face of any abnormal growth on the conjunctiva, particularly in areas of high sun exposure.

II. DESCRIPTION:

A 28-year-old patient with xerodermapigmentosum who had been lost to follow-up for 4 years was referred for a large tumour infiltrating the right eyeball. Questioning revealed a left conjunctival lesion that had been progressively increasing in volume for 2 years. Clinical examination revealed a voluminous conjunctival tumor of the left eye invading the eyeball 5 (figure 1). A biopsy of the tumor was performed, and the anatomopathological result came back in favor of a well-differentiated squamous cell carcinoma. Orbitocerebral CT scan showed a tumour mass infiltrating the eyeball (figure 2). As part of an extension work-up, the scan was normal. The patient underwent exenteration. The residual cavity was filled with biogas wicks to promote budding and haemostasis. Progress was favorable.

III. DISCUSSION

Xerodermapigmentosum is a hereditary disease, more frequently observed in regions of high consanguinity. The condition is characterized by skin changes, often accompanied by ocular lesions that can lead to blindness. The severity of ocular damage is accentuated by the appearance of tumours, mainly squamous cell carcinomas, which affect the functional and vital prognosis. These tumors are generally located on the eyelids, conjunctiva and cornea. Progression of squamous cell carcinoma occurs mainly locally, extending both superficially and deeply, sometimes making complete surgical excision difficult. In such cases, exenteration and lymph node dissection may be necessary.

REFERENCE

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Fig1: Voluminous ocular mass invading the left eye

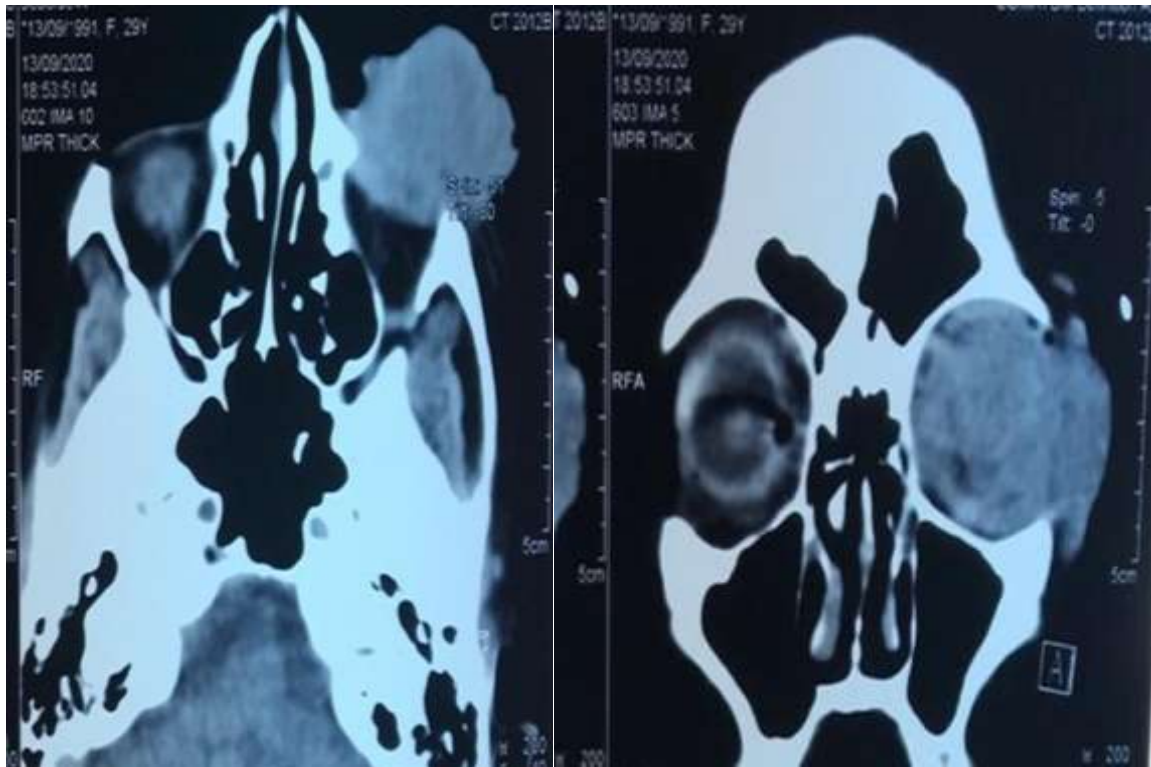


Fig 2: Tumoral process centered on the eye globe with tissue density of the left eye