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Therapeutic benefit of melatonin in refractory central serous chorioretinopathy.

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Abstract

PURPOSE: To evaluate the efficacy and safety of melatonin for the treatment of chronic central serous chorioretinopathy (CSCR).

METHODS: Prospective comparative case series. A total of 13 patients with chronic CSCR were treated for 1 month: 8 patients were treated orally with 3 mg melatonin t.i.d., and 5 with placebo. All patients had 20/40 or worse Early Treatment Diabetic Retinopathy Study (ETDRS) best-corrected visual acuity (BCVA) in the affected eye or presented an incapacitating scotoma. Most of the patients had previous failed treatments for their condition. Observational procedures included ETDRS BCVA, and complete ophthalmic examination. Optical coherence tomography (OCT) was performed at day 1 and week 4. Fluorescein angiography was performed at baseline only for diagnostic purposes. Data were subjected to two-sample t-test statistical analysis. P-values of <0.05 were considered statistically significant.

RESULTS: At 1-month follow-up, BCVA significantly improved in 87.5% of patients treated with melatonin (7 of 8 patients, P<0.05). All patients showed a mean significant reduction (P<0.01) of central macular thickness (CMT) when compared with the baseline, with 3 patients (37.5%) exhibiting complete resolution of subretinal fluid at 1-month follow-up. No significant side effects were observed. No changes in BCVA or CMT were noted in the control group.

CONCLUSIONS: These results suggest that melatonin is safe, well tolerated, and effective in the treatment of chronic CSCR, as it significantly improved BCVA and CMT in patients with this pathology. Further evaluations with longer follow-up and a larger patient population are desirable.

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