

THE EFFICACY OF RED GLASSES IN RETINAL DYSTROPHIES – Abstract

IK Jalili

The efficacy of red transmittance 550 nm as compared to ordinary dark or non-tinted glasses was assessed in 24 diagnosed cases of these conditions (cone-rod dystrophy 14, rod-cone dystrophy 2, rod-monochromatism 5 and central areolar dystrophy 3). Independent observers evaluated improvements in (a) visual acuity on Sheridan Gardiner testing in normal day light illumination; (b) photophobia as assessed by reduction in blinking and orbicularis spasms and (c) subjective comfort. Twelve out of 14 (86%) cases of cone-rod dystrophy and 3 out of 5 (60%) of patients with rod monochromatism demonstrated marked improvement on all three parameters with red as compared to dark glasses. Only 2 cases (14%) of cone-rod dystrophy preferred dark tinted over red glasses. There was no change with any kind of glasses in all the three cases of central areolar choroidal dystrophy, as well as the 2 cases of rod-cone dystrophy. In spite of the small sample size, it seems that patients with cone-rod dystrophy especially in its early stages would benefit from red glasses by cutting down the short and middle wave length radiation, red glasses will attenuate the ambient illumination that would otherwise saturate the patient's rods, and thus prevent him from seeing in normal daylight illumination.