Do patients with glaucoma have difficulty recognising faces?

Glen FC, Crabb DP, Smith ND, Burton R, Garway-Heath DF.

Department of Optometry and Visual Science, City University London, Northampton Square, London, EC1V 0HB, United Kingdom.

PURPOSE: To compare face recognition performance of glaucomatous patients with age-similar visually healthy people.

Methods: Percentage of correctly identified faces in the Cambridge Face Memory Test was assessed in glaucomatous patients (n=54; mean age=69) with a range of visual field (VF) defects and visually healthy controls (n=41; mean age=67). All participants underwent cognitive and visual assessment (binocular visual acuity [BVA], contrast sensitivity [CS], and Humphrey VFs, both 10-2 and 24-2) and had BVA of at least 0.18 logMAR. Patients were classified as having 'early', 'moderate' or 'advanced' VF defects using the Hodapp, Parrish and Anderson

METHOD: Patients were also stratified by better-eye 10-2 MD being better or worse than the 1% normative value. Results: There were no significant differences in age (p=0.25) nor cognitive ability (p=0.31) between groups; however, differences in BVA and CS were statistically significant (p<0.05). Patients with advanced VF defects identified fewer faces on average (± SD) (66 ± 15%) than those with early (75 ± 11%) and moderate (75 ± 13%) defects and controls (75 ± 11%); (p<0.05)). Patients with a best-eye 10-2 MD p<1% identified fewer faces (67 ± 13 %) than those with 10-2 MD p>1% (77 ± 11 %) and controls (75 ± 11 %); p<0.01. Multiple regression analysis revealed CS was important for face recognition.

CONCLUSIONS: When compared to age-similar people with healthy vision, glaucomatous patients with advanced bilateral 24-2 VF loss, significant 10-2 VF loss or poor CS are more likely to experience problems with face recognition.


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