Orbital decompression in Graves’ orbitopathy: state of the art and novel perspectives
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Graves’ orbitopathy affects hundreds of thousands of people in the world every year. It causes pain, discomfort, double vision, disfigurement, and sometimes blindness. People suffering with Graves’ orbitopathy have a poor quality of life and long-term psychosocial morbidity. The quality of care received by the majority of people affected by this condition can be improved. Conventional treatments are effective when used appropriately, but centers with expertise are needed. Not all patients are offered effective treatments either because they are not referred early or at all. People at high risk of developing Graves’ orbitopathy can be identified, and effective risk management can potentially lessen the severity of the disease.

The care of people with Graves’ orbitopathy can be vastly improved by making centers of excellence more accessible to them.

In October 2009, international experts on Graves’ orbitopathy, representatives of professional organizations, and patient representatives met in Amsterdam and unanimously agreed on the following:

Health care providers and professional organizations should recognize the need to improve the care of people with Graves’ orbitopathy and support plans for implementing better care and prevention.

The general objectives are:
- To minimize the morbidity associated with Graves’ orbitopathy and improve the patients’ experience and quality of life
- To prevent the development of Graves’ orbitopathy in people at high risk

The 5-year targets are:
- Raise awareness of this condition among health care professionals and managers
- Establish pathways of referral and care
- Support existing centers of excellence in management of this condition
- Create new centers of excellence in localities where they are lacking
- Establish audits and monitoring to ensure quality assurance of services to people with Graves’ orbitopathy
- Implement measures to reduce the incidence and morbidity of the disorder by:
  - Halving the time from presentation to diagnosis
  - Halving the time from diagnosis to referral to a center of excellence
  - Appropriate management of thyroid dysfunction including use of radioiodine
  - Vigorous antismoking measures in patients at risk of or with Graves’ orbitopathy
- Improve the existing research networks and develop further international collaborative research

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