AAO: Research highlights vision issues seen in pediatric sickle cell disease

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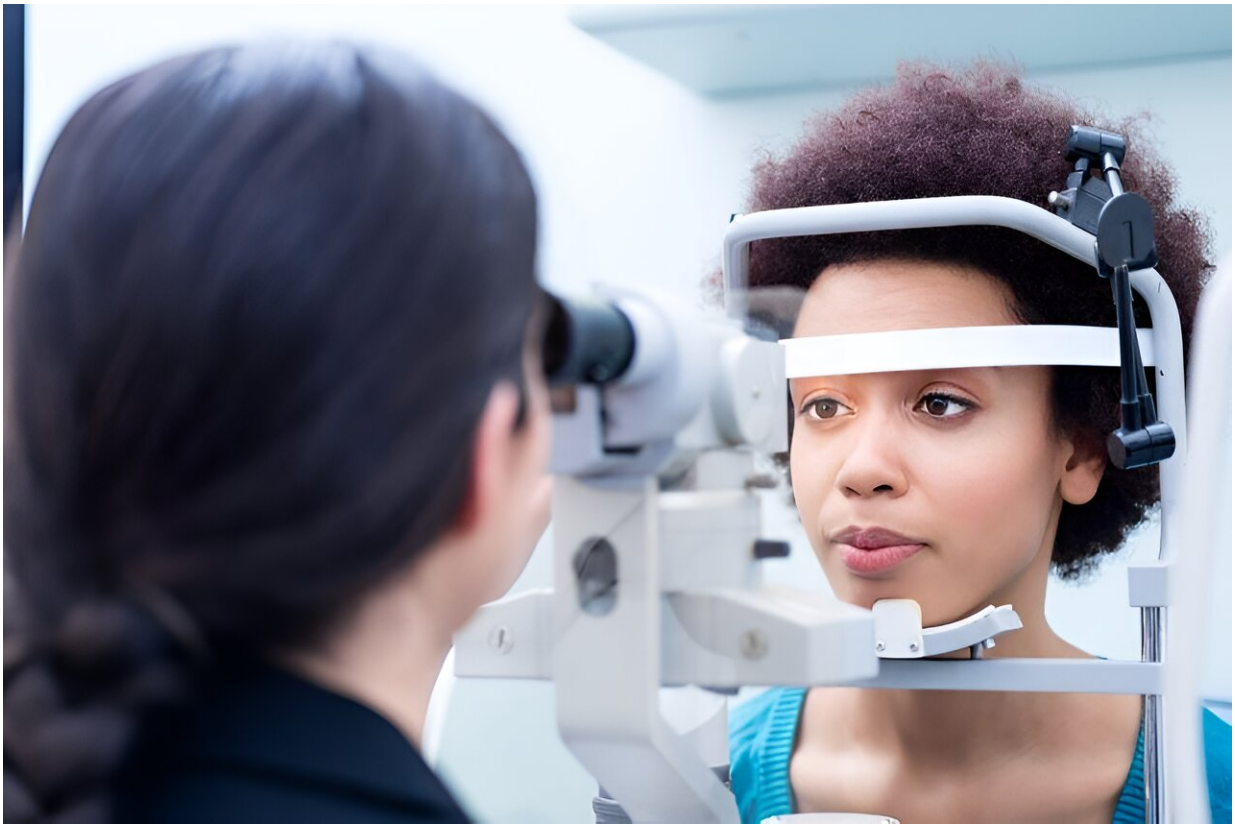

For pediatric patients with sickle cell disease (SCD), ophthalmologic complications include nonproliferative retinopathy (NPR) and proliferative retinopathy (PR), which occur in 33 and 6 percent,

respectively, according to a study presented at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Ophthalmology, held from Nov. 3 to 6 in San Francisco.

Barbara Smith, M.D., and Mary Ellen Hoehn, M.D., from the University of Tennessee Health Science Center, describe ophthalmologic manifestations among pediatric patients with SCD who had a dilated eye exam from October 2010 to September 2022. A total of 652 patients were included who underwent eye exams during 2,240 visits.

The researchers found that 33 percent of the patients had NPR and 6 percent had PR. Panretinal photocoagulation was received by 33 eyes, most commonly for PR stage 3 (43 percent). Five eyes, all with PR, received intravitreal anti-vascular endothelial growth factor therapy. Retinal detachment and retinal artery occlusion occurred in two patients each. Following complications from SCD, vision loss (final best corrected visual acuity 20/60) was seen in one patient with a central retinal artery occlusion.

"Our data underscores the need for patients—including pediatric patients—with sickle cell disease to get routine ophthalmic screenings along with appropriate systemic and ophthalmic treatment," Hoehn said in a statement.

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