— Daivajna K N Somayaji

But hurry, the deadline to submit forms is December 16.

wine culture at the Rotary House of Service, 2143, 16 E Main, HAL Second Stage, Indiranagar, 7.30 pm.

Meditation Centre, Kumara Park, 3 pm onwards.

Sree Ayyappa Temple Trust: Mandala

Rio, by National Geographic Channel, Bangalore International Centre, The Energy and Resource Institute, 4th Main, Domlur Second Stage, 6 pm.

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Retinitis Pigmentosa, is a rare but extremely debilitating form of eye disorder, wherein the person's eyesight degenerates rapidly. Dr Arun Samprathi, paediatric ophthalmologist and squint specialist, answers some queries related to the disorder

Marrying in the family causes this disorder

TIMES PRESCRIPTION

RETINITIS PIGMENTOSA

What is Retinitis Pigmentosa?
Retinitis Pigmentosa (RP) is a genetic disorder affecting the retina. The cells on the retina — rods and cones — function in converting the light rays into electric impulses, which are transmitted to the brain for decoding and image formation. The RP affects the rods and cones, results in degeneration and loss of function leading to loss of vision. It is commonly called "tunnel vision" due to the nature of the loss of vision.

What causes this disorder?
It is predominantly a genetic disorder. It is more common in India due to the practice of marriage between cousins and relatives (consanguinity). This leads to a higher incidence of genetic disorders like RP. There are, however, other forms of inheritance where a person may get RP.

If it is genetic, does every generation have cause for concern?
Not necessarily. There are various modes of inheritance such as autosomal recessive, dominant, X-linked etc. We can predict the approximate chances of inheritance based on the genetic analysis. Consanguineous marriage increases the risk.

EYE CARE

What are the main problems faced by people with RP?
Initial symptoms include night blindness. Gradually there is a loss of peripheral vision leading to tunnel vision. As vision loss progresses, the "tunnel" becomes more and more narrow. In the later stages, some patients may also lose central vision.

Is there cure for RP?

> There is no concrete treatment either for prevention or for arresting the progression. Some treatments that are under research are retinal cell transplant and gene therapy. Some researchers have found benefit from Vitamin A therapy

Though lot of research is in progress, there is no concrete treatment either for prevention or for arresting the progression. Some researchers have found benefit from Vitamin A therapy. Other treatment modalities that are under research are retinal cell transplant and gene therapy.

What are the statistics for Karnataka?
We don't have any statistics for Karnataka or for India. The incidence in western countries is said to be at 1 in every 4,000 people. In south India the incidence should be higher due to the practice of consanguineous marriage.

Does RP always lead to complete blindness?
In some cases, RP leads to complete blindness. However, in majority of the cases there is loss of central vision and they will be legally blind by around 40 years of age. These patients will be able to move around without much help.

What is the care/precautions a person with RP should follow?
Since a person with RP suffers from night blindness, they will need support while moving around in the dark. Besides, there are a number of low vision aids (magnifiers, telescopes, etc.) and non-optical devices available to help them.

(As told to Smitha Rao)

[This is a weekly column on medical issues and health tips)

FIRST AID: HANGOVER TIPS

- Drink plenty of water
- Have a hearty breakfast
- Work it out at the gym or exercise at home
- Have warm water with the juice of an entire lemon squeezed in
- Strong coffee with aspirin helps in the case of throbbing headaches
- Drink fruit juice or tender coconut water