

DEBATE: JIA-ASSOCIATED CHRONIC UVEITIS: IS CHRONIC TOPICAL CORTICOSTEROID THERAPY EVER ACCEPTABLE TREATMENT? – NO

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JIA-associated uveitis frequently has been reported to result in visual impairment as a result of ocular complications such as the development of cataract or glaucoma. However, topical corticosteroid therapy can also lead to these complications. Retrospective studies have looked at the incidence rates of new-onset cataract and glaucoma in these populations and demonstrate that treatment of chronic disease with topical steroids can lead to a significant incidence of these problems. Disease control may also be less adequate with this mode of therapy, particularly if any topical therapy is aggressively tapered so as to reduce the cumulative dose of corticosteroid administered as a result of its potential ocular side-effects. In contrast, appropriate systemic medication can be used to attain adequate control of disease in the longer-term, with a consequently greater chance for a good visual outcome over the often chronic course of this condition.