
Low use of laboratory tests in the diagnosis of the ocular surface
Escaso uso de las pruebas de laboratorio en el diagnóstico de la superficie ocular

Dear Sir,

May I take advantage of this section in the S.E.O. journal to encourage our colleagues to utilize lab tests for a better and faster diagnosis of ocular surface diseases.

In most patients it is enough to perform a clinical study with slit lamp and perform a few clinical tests, but in some cases diagnostic needs call for special laboratory tests, the execution of which does not require large hospital infrastructures. We all know about private labs which assist in the diagnostics of ocular diseases, therefore there shouldn't be any difficulties to perform these tests in a hospital. On many occasions it is lack of awareness of the possibilities offered by impression cytology, ocular allergy tests, tear crystallization (among many others) which keeps us from using them. So I would

like to encourage all ophthalmologists, mainly those who focus on the ocular surface, to make use of said techniques because it will allow them greater knowledge of the status and condition of the lachrymal film alterations, of the ocular surface epithelium, the morphological and functional condition of the tear gland and of numerous organs, mainly exocrine organs, in patients with systemic diseases involving the eyes.

In addition to the above, said lab tests allow for an adequate follow-up of the ocular surface of patients with medical and surgical treatments. At present, when surgery is becoming common for regenerating the corneal epithelium, mainly in patients with limbus deficiency, these techniques will help us to know the pre- and post-surgery condition of the ocular surface enabling an adequate assessment of the success of the surgery and the length of its effects long before a clinical assessment.

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