

## Violation of the Right to Life in a Retinoblastoma Child

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**Abstract:** Providing medical care to children implies the consent of their parents; nevertheless the parents do not have the right to compel them to death. The right to life is recognized by both the national and international law. We report the case of a 1- year- old male baby of Retinoblastoma. Retinoblastoma is a potential lethal tumor affecting young children. Parents need to implement all the requirements of the treatment; otherwise, they will infringe their children right to life.

**Keywords:** medical care, Retinoblastoma, tumor, law.

### INTRODUCTION

Retinoblastoma is an aggressive eye cancer of infancy and childhood. Survival and the chance of saving vision depend on severity of disease at presentation [1].

Patients who have this potentially lethal malignant neoplasm are now reported to have a survival rate of more than 90% in developed countries [2]. Nevertheless, the mortality rate remains as high as 50% in developing nations [3, 4]. The treatment of children suffering from retinoblastoma needs the cooperation of their parents of legal guardians.

### CASE REPORT

We report the case of a 1- year- old male baby, brought by his mother for right eye proptosis. The onset was gradual, so the parents went to a witch doctor. After three months of treatment, no improvement was noticed; then the parent decided to attend the Institute of ophthalmology.

The clinical findings were: a proptosis both eyes, predominant in the right. At the slit lamp, we noticed in the left eye: a normal anterior segment, the fundus was not reachable. In the right eye, the proptosis was so huge that the cornea was already perforated. We concluded to a bilateral retinoblastoma, and we requested an orbital-cranial computed tomography (CT) which showed calcifications in both eyes. The child was hospitalized in the oncology ward after the fair consent of the parents. The oncologist started chemotherapy

before we could enucleate the right eye. After three days of hospitalization, the parents refused to continue with the treatment and left the hospital despite the lethal prognosis.



**Fig 1: Retinoblastoma in a 1- year- old male baby**

### DISCUSSION

Retinoblastoma is a rare malignant tumor; it may occur at any age, but most often it occurs in younger children, usually before the age of two years [5, 6].

Primary enucleation continues to be the treatment of choice for advanced intraocular retinoblastoma, especially when only one eye is involved. Treatment options include enucleation, cryotherapy, photocoagulation, photochemistry,

external-beam radiation, and radiation therapy using episcleral plaques. [7].

Chemoreduction in combination with focal therapy is now used extensively in the primary management of retinoblastoma [7, 8]. Currently, enucleation is the standard treatment to manage eyes categorized as group E in the International Classification of Retinoblastoma [9]. This child was in the group E, and was administered a chemotherapy (chemoreduction) prior to enucleation. By refusing to continue the treatment, the parents infringed the child right to life. In the provision of the article 3 of the universal declaration for human rights: "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person" [10].

### CONCLUSION

Retinoblastoma is a potential lethal tumor affecting young children. Parents need to implement all the requirements of the treatment; otherwise, they will infringe their children right to life.

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