International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR)
ISSN: 2319-7064
ResearchGate Impact Factor (2018): 0.28 | SJIF (2019): 7.583

# Smart Phone Blindness - A Case Report

**Mridula V Amarnath**

Chinmaya Mission Hospital, Bangalore, Karnataka, India

**Abstract:** ***Transient loss of vision after using a smart phone is a temporary phenomenon where in a person has loss of vision in one eye for a short duration after prolonged exposure to the smart phone in the dark. This phenomenon is attributed to the bleaching of the retinal pigments. It is important to be aware of this condition and careful history needs to be taken from the patient before the patient is started on lifelong treatment.***

**Keywords:** Smart phone, loss of vision

## 1. Introduction

**Case 1**
A 30 year old male patient had come to our OPD with complaints of transient loss of vision in his right eye. When asked in detail he revealed that he was lying on his left side and was looking at his smart phone at night for more than one hour. When the lights went off he was unable to see anything through his right eye. But however after a period of 20 minutes it started improving and he was slowly able to see with his right eye.

**Case 2**
A 40 year old lady said that she had loss of vision in her right eye at night which lasted for close to 30 minutes. During this period she could see various shapes floating around. Prior to that, she was using her phone for close to 45 minutes. Since she was clueless and worried, she immediately closed her eyes and went to sleep and was happy to regain her vision the next day.

Both these individuals when consulted a physician diagnosed it as a possible cause of transient ischemic attack and was advised to start on aspirin and statins.

Another lady aged 60 years had a similar episode of transient unilateral loss of vision twice and she failed to report the usage of phone prior to the episode as she considered it as irrelevant. Later she was diagnosed as a case of multiple sclerosis and was started on medications.

## 2. Discussion

All these patients had visual symptoms during the night after looking at their smart phones for a very long duration[1]. Transient smart phone blindness was first discovered in the year 2016. There was temporary loss of vision which occurred at night after prolonged usage of smart phones which was due to the differential bleaching of the photopigment. However the symptoms resolved after a couple of minutes and this was due to the scotopic recovery after the bleach.

A study done showed that viewing the smart phone monocularly at an arm's length for several hours did lead to blurring of vision which recovered after several minutes[3]. Hence it shows that it is very important to assess the history if they have had exposure to smart phones in the dark for a long period. If not assessed, it can be misdiagnosed as a case of a TIA or MS[4]. This can help the patients from being started on unwanted medications and just a simple word of reassurance would be enough.

Since smart phones have become an essential commodity in one's life this unique phenomenon should always be kept in mind. Some of the other complications due to the use of smart phones is traffic accidents caused by the typical smart phone zombies and nomophobia or a sort of anxiety disorder of being out of cellular phone contact. It seems to have a very large population as shown by certain studies[2].

Other dangerous consequences due to improper use of smart phones include traffic accidents caused by "smartphone zombies" and selfie-related injuries and deaths. Half of selfie-related deaths in 2015 happened in India. Some countries have traffic lights on the road at pedestrian crossings and have dedicated pavements for smartphone zombies.

## References

[1] Alim- Marvasti A, Bi W. Transient smart phone blindness .N Engl J Med.2016;(374):2502-2504
[2] Irshad F, Adhiyaman. Smartphone in today's world. Can J Ophthalmol .2017;(34):12-14
[3] Sathiamoorthi. Smartphone blindness- in neurologic practice. Neurology 2015;(88):88-90
[4] Wingerchuk K, Mia ST. Misdiagnosis in neurologic practice. Med J .2015;(45):223-225

.