Summary

To report the pattern of ocular trauma among school pupils in Ilorin, Nigeria, a cross sectional survey of primary school children in 10 randomly selected primary schools within Ilorin, Nigeria was carried out between July 2005 and January 2006. Relevant ocular history and basic ocular examinations were carried out on the children that were selected from a multi-stage sampling process. Diagnosis of ocular trauma was based on historical recollection together with corroborating ocular signs among affected pupils. Ocular trauma was found among 11 (8 boys and 3 girls) out of 1,393 (0.8%) pupils and their ages ranged from 5 to 13 years. The trauma related ocular pathology found among the 11 pupils included unilateral phthisis bulbi (2, 0.14%), couching (1, 0.07%) and retinal detachment (1,0.07%) all leading to blindness in the affected eyes. There was also a unilateral visual impairment caused by traumatic optic atrophy. Others included eyelid bruises (2, 0.14%) and one pupil (0.07%) each with hyphema, eyelid ecchymosis, eyelid laceration, and subconjunctival haemorrhage. The ocular trauma occurred following unsupervised play (4,36.40%), corporal punishment at school and at home (3,27.30%), fight (2,18.20%), home accident (1, 9.10%) and couching (1,9.10%). School pupils can lose vision to preventable traumatic eye injuries both at school and at home. Measures to minimize ocular trauma both in the home and at school are advocated.