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INTRAVITREAL DEXAMETHASONE IMPLANT CONCOMITANT TO CATARACT SURGERY IN RETINITIS PIGMENTOSA: POTENTIAL NEUROPROTECTIVE EFFECT.

Poster

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Purpose:

To evaluate retrospectively retinal morphology and function in retinitis pigmentosa (RP) patients following combined cataract surgery and intravitreal dexamethasone implant (Ozurdex).

Methods:

Macular structure (high resolution OCT) and function (ETDRS acuity) were retrospectively evaluated in a group of typical RP patients six months following combined, uncomplicated, cataract surgery and intravitreal Ozurdex implant ("ozucat" group). The results were compared to those obtained from an age and disease stage-similar group of typical RP patients six months following uncomplicated cataract surgery alone ("cataract" group). Exclusion criteria were: absence of previous macula edema or schisis at pre-surgery stage and good signal in OCT scan (>7/10).

Results:

At six months post-surgery, the "ozucat" group showed an improvement in the median ellipsoid zone length (3%, $p < 0.05$) and ETDRS visual acuity (0.4 Log MAR, $p < 0.05$). Such changes were not observed in the "cataract" group. Compared to the "cataract" group, the "ozucat" group showed a significant increase in the median ellipsoid zone length (Mann Whitney, $p < 0.01$) and a borderline significant increase in the median ETDRS visual acuity ($p < 0.09$).

Conclusions:

These results indicate a higher retinal EZ restoration following combined cataract surgery and intravitreal dexamethasone implant in RP. Further studies would be useful to evaluate the anti-inflammatory and photoreceptor neuroprotective effect of intravitreal dexamethasone implant in RP patients undergoing cataract surgery.