PHACOEMLUSIFICATION AND VITREO-MACULAR TRACTION: A CONTROVERSIAL RELATIONSHIP

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Purpose: To highlight the controversial relationship between phacoemulsification cataract extraction and postoperative acute development of Vitreo-Macular Traction (VMT) syndrome. Methods: Case presentation of an 83-year-old patient that underwent uneventful phacoemulsification. Postoperatively however, he experienced development of incomplete acute posterior vitreous detachment (PVD) with accompanying VMT syndrome. Both the posterior hyaloid and the macula were closely monitored by serial Spectral Domain Optical Coherence Tomography (SD-OCT) scans.

Results: The postoperative acute VMT syndrome spontaneously resolved within four weeks in accordance with the completion of the PVD. The macular contour improved without intervention. Postoperative SD-OCT played a pivotal role in the close monitoring of the vitreous and macular pathology and dictated the subsequent and eventually conservative management.

Conclusions: Phacoemulsification can have an unpredictable, dual effect on the postoperative macular status, either exacerbating an incomplete acute PVD with accompanying development of VMT or contrariwise leading to complete separation of the posterior hyaloid from the macula and subsequent lysis of a preoperative VMT. In both cases, the confirmation of the preoperative vitreous and macular status is of paramount importance. Financial Disclosure: No