REFRACTIVE OUTCOMES OF PATIENTS UNDERGOING COMBINED DESCemet’s MEMBRANE ENDOTHELIAL KERATOPLASTY AND PHACOEMULSIFICATION SURGERY

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Background Combining cataract surgery with Descemet’s membrane endothelial keratoplasty (DMEK) surgery compared to staged surgeries provides a cost-effective method with faster visual rehabilitation and is more convenient for the patient. However, the combined procedure can lead to a refractive shift that can be difficult to predict. We aimed to assess the refractive outcomes of our patients.

Methods All patients who underwent combined DMEK procedures with phacoemulsification and insertion of IOLs between January 2016 and October 2022 were identified using the Medisoft audit tool. Data including demographics, keratometry, postoperative refraction and refractive aim were obtained.

Results Twenty eyes which underwent combined procedure for Fuchs’ endothelial dystrophy were included. The average age was 72.4 years (range 60–95) and 70% were female (n=14). Eighteen (90%) of patients had improved visual acuity postoperatively with a mean improvement of 0.4 LogMAR overall. The average change in predicted outcome was a hyperopic shift of +0.55D (range -0.99 to +2.49D) with 65% (n=13) of patients achieving a more hyperopic outcome than aimed for. Three patients who achieved +1.50D over the predicted outcome had steeper K-readings of >46D, however, there was no other significant difference in K-readings between the patients who achieved a more myopic outcome and those that that achieved a hyperopic outcome.

Conclusion Refractive outcomes of patients undergoing combined cataract and DMEK surgery can be unpredictable. We suggest aiming for a more myopic target (such as -1.00D instead of -0.50D) in these patients may better protect against an unfavourable hyperopic outcome particularly in this age group.

AN INNOVATIVE TECHNIQUE FOR PRACTISING PEELING OF DONOR DESCemet’S MEMBRANE FOR DESCemet’S MEMBRANE ENDOTHELIAL KERATOPLASTY

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Purpose To evaluate the feasibility of residual corneoscleral buttons after primary surgery for practising the donor tissue preparation for Descemet’s membrane endothelial keratoplasty (DMEK) by trainees and fellows.

Methods Fellows with zero experience in DMEK used 5 residual corneoscleral buttons after DSAEK surgery (central 8 mm graft was punched during the primary surgery), to practice donor Descemet’s membrane peeling. A 9.5 mm donor punch was used for partial cutting of the residual button after staining it with brilliant blue G for 1 minute. 360° stripping of Descemet’s was practised under a balanced salt solution.

Result Fellow successfully peeled 360° Descemet’s membrane in 3 out of 5 residual corneoscleral buttons.

Conclusion Residual corneoscleral button is an excellent source to practice donor Descemet’s membrane peeling for DMEK. This technique can provide cost-effective and easily available platform to the trainees and fellows for gaining skills and practising graft preparation without the fear of financial loss or surgery deferment in case of tissue loss or damage.