

Causes and Management of Descemet's Membrane Detachment Associated with Cataract Surgery—Not Always a Benign Problem

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Abstract

Introduction: *Detachments of Descemet's membrane (DM) occur with not uncommon frequency during cataract surgery. The figure for extracapsular cataract extraction (ECCE) is 2.6%, and that for phacoemulsification is 0.5%. Most detachments are small and of little visual consequence. Large detachments are rare but can lead to loss of vision. Early recognition and appropriate management is the key to a favourable outcome. This review provides cataract surgeons with guidelines to the management of this problem.* **Methods:** *A review of reported studies on the subject was made using a MEDLINE search. A summary of the reviewed data is presented.* **Results:** *The problem is fairly widespread, given the number of cataract operations done today. The important points with regard to aetiology, classification, recognition and appropriate management are presented in this article.* **Conclusion:** *DM detachment should not be taken lightly because of the potential for serious visual outcome. It may be avoided in a large majority of cases. Appropriate and prompt management may prevent the patient from suffering visual loss should it occur.*

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Key words: *Corneal decompensation, Descemet stripping, Extracapsular cataract extraction, Penetrating keratoplasty, Phacoemulsification*

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