

## **Herpetic uveitis: The effect of prophylactic medications following cataract surgery**

**Purpose:** To investigate outcomes in eyes with herpetic uveitis following intra-ocular surgery.

**Methods:** Retrospective cohort study of patients with herpetic uveitis undergoing cataract surgery from the Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital, Melbourne, from 2007 through to 2020[SR1].

**Results:** Sixteen patients (11 females) with aqueous PCR-confirmed recurrent/persistent herpetic uveitis were reviewed: six eyes with Herpes simplex and 10 eyes with Varicella Zoster. Median age at initial diagnosis was 68 years (range 52-88), and 71 years (range 54-73) at the time of surgery. Median duration of quiescence prior to surgery was 7.8 months (range 0-51). Increased topical steroid was used prophylactically pre-operatively in 67% Herpes simplex eyes (N = 4) and 50% (N = 5) of the Varicella Zoster eyes. Ten eyes overall were treated with concurrent antiviral prior to surgery (one with aciclovir ointment; nine with oral antiviral). In nine of 16 eyes topical steroids were ceased completely within a median of 23 weeks following surgery, which led to a relapse in six of the nine. Four of six relapses had no oral antiviral coverage at the time.

**Conclusion:** Increasing topical steroid with ongoing antiviral treatment was the preferred prophylactic measure used in herpetic uveitis prior to cataract surgery. Oral antiviral treatment appears effective in reducing relapses. Complete cessation of topical steroid post-operatively was associated with high rates of relapse, particularly in the absence of concurrent antiviral prophylaxis and this should therefore be done extremely cautiously