



Cataract surgery after trabeculectomy increases the risk of bleb failure and this risk is increased if the time between trabeculectomy and cataract surgery is short.

The Science behind the Tip

Trabeculectomy surgery is a recognised risk factor for the subsequent development of cataract. Phacoemulsification with intraocular lens implantation performed in the presence of a functioning trabeculectomy bleb has an adverse effect on IOP control and can lead to failure of the trabeculectomy bleb¹. Casson et al reported that 18% of patients who had a functioning bleb had commenced or were using additional glaucoma medication 2 years after cataract surgery².

The risk of trabeculectomy failure is increased if the time between trabeculectomy and cataract surgery is short; with an adjusted declining hazard ratio of 3.00 (95% CI 1.11 - 8.14) at 6 months and 1.32 (95% CI 1.02 -1.69) at 2 years³. The use of subconjunctival injections of 5-fluorouracil after cataract surgery in these circumstances does not appear to reduce the risk of trabeculectomy failure⁴.

References

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2. Casson R, Rahman R, Salmon J.F. Phacoemulsification with intraocular lens implantation after trabeculectomy. *J Glaucoma* 2002; 11:429-433.
3. Husain R, Liang S, Foster PJ et al Cataract surgery after trabeculectomy: the effect on trabeculectomy function. *Arch Ophthalmol* 2012; 130: 165-170.
4. Shahid H, Salmon JF. Use of 5-fluorouracil injections to reduce the risk of trabeculectomy bleb failure after cataract surgery. *J Ocular Pharm & Therapeutics* 2010; 26:119-123.