

The D-ACE Technique: A Logical Choice for Superior Bullous Detachments Not Suitable for Pneumatic Retinopexy

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Advantages:

The D-ACE (Drain-Air [gas]-Cryopexy-Exopant) technique of retinal detachment repair is a logical choice as an alternative to attempted repair of superior, bullous retinal detachments by pneumatic retinopexy. Briefly stated, the advantages of this technique include a significantly higher likelihood of primary repair (especially in pseudophakes) and in many cases, the assurance that the macula will not detach under the influence of a large air/gas bubble if the detachment is quite bullous. New retinal breaks with this technique are arguably less likely postoperatively, but it is doubtless that cryopexy is performed in a more controlled fashion in terms of intensity and location if the offending breaks are accompanied by less fluid, which is always true with the D-ACE technique.

Methods:

The basic technique of the D-ACE sequence will be briefly reviewed, but surgical indications for its preferential suitability obviously are founded on the clinical features of the detachment itself, as well as the patient's preferences following full disclosure regarding the procedures and their respective success rates. Phakic versus pseudophakic status would be a basic determination, as would the attached versus detached status of the macula and how much subretinal fluid is present. Retinal break size and location may also be critical as far as the size of the bubble that may be used safely and the likelihood of compliance on the patient's part to head position effectively, and particularly if the patient has comorbidities that might negate appropriate head position.

Effectiveness / Safety:

Twenty-seven eyes chosen for the D-ACE technique as opposed to pneumatic retinopexy over a 36-month period are reviewed for effectiveness and complications. Significantly, only one eye in this consecutive retrospective review redetached, more than two years after a successful initial procedure, and one case developed macular pucker. All cases resulted in improved vision.