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Endophthalmitis remains a small but devastating complication after cataract surgery, a commonly performed procedure in the US.

This retrospective study was well designed, but as acknowledged by the authors, it suffers from all the shortcomings of a retrospective design, such as lack of control of the variables and inability to establish treatment guidelines. It is the largest population based series of endophthalmitis cases after cataract surgery with 615 cases, whereas the landmark EVS had 420 cases.

The study found that the age group 75-84 years had the highest rates of endophthalmitis. It would be interesting to know if this age group also had the highest rates of cataract surgery. The study also found that the largest number of cases occurred in Florida and lowest in Michigan, yet these findings did not correlate with the cataract surgery rate per 1,000 person/years in those states, since Florida and Michigan both had the highest cataract surgery rates. The authors did not comment on the possible causes of increased endophthalmitis rates in Florida.

Perhaps the most surprising finding was that vitrectomy was common in eyes with acuity better than LP, which goes against the recommendations of the EVS. The study also found that among those with initial visual acuity of better than LP, vitrectomy resulted in worse visual outcome.

Another interesting finding is the borderline positive association between the use of amikacin with vancomycin for the intravitreal injection compared to ceftazidime with vancomycin with improved probability of vision to better than 20/200 with the amikacin combination. As stated above, this is a retrospective study, but it may influence the antibiotic choice among retina specialists treating post-cataract surgery endophthalmitis.

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