

Black and Hispanic patients treated for retinal detachment with surgery had worse vision results than white patients

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New research from Boston Medical Center found that Black and Hispanics patients treated with surgery for retinal detachment had worse

vision results than white patients. Published in the *Canadian Journal of Ophthalmology*, the study suggests that higher rates of proliferative vitreoretinopathy (PVR), retinal scarring resulting from retinal detachment, in minority patients may contribute to these findings.

Retinal detachment is a sight-threatening condition requiring [surgical treatment](#). Researchers discovered that all patients had similar single surgery success rates but that minority patients had significantly worse vision outcomes and were more likely to have multiple retinal breaks.

While previous studies have shown inferior results for retinal surgery among minority patients, many of the studies were completed outside of the United States, where access to [medical care](#) may influence outcomes. This study, performed in an environment with universal health care, reveals that race and ethnicity may impact both the presentation and outcomes of retinal detachment surgery.

"An understanding of patient and group-specific risk factors can help surgeons better choose the appropriate procedure to best achieve their goals of vision preservation and restoration," said lead author Steven Ness, MD, ophthalmology specialist at Boston Medical Center and assistant professor of ophthalmology at Boston University Chobanian & Avedisian School of Medicine.

Researchers examined the charts of 124 Black and Hispanic patients and 71 White patients who were treated surgically for retinal detachment at Boston Medical Center. The patient's demographics, preoperative characteristics, and surgical outcomes were compared.

Researchers believe that larger-scale studies are needed to support the findings in regards to higher risk for PVR in minority patients—but if these findings are verified, physicians may need to change their surgical approach to retinal detachment with procedures that may more fully

address this risk factor.

The study also found that detachment chronicity, measured by the duration of patient symptoms, was similar among patient groups, which suggests that [minority patients](#) are at higher risk for PVR for reasons other than [retinal detachment](#) duration, which is currently considered the primary predictor of PVR risk.

More information: Jia Xu et al, Effect of race and ethnicity on surgical outcomes for rhegmatogenous retinal detachments, *Canadian Journal of Ophthalmology* (2023). [DOI: 10.1016/j.jcjo.2022.12.003](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcjo.2022.12.003)

Provided by Boston Medical Center

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