A New Instrument for Cleaning the Posterior Capsule

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**FIGURE 1A:** Instrument for cleaning the posterior capsule.

The number of planned extracapsular cataract procedures has increased in recent years. Management of the posterior capsule with regard to primary discussion has been the subject of debate. Reports of posterior capsular opacification vary from 10% to 53% with a 2- to 3-year follow-up. This wide variation is difficult to explain precisely because of many variables such as medications, instrumentation, type and extent of cataract, patient population and care in cleaning the posterior capsule.

Opacification of the posterior capsule can result from the proliferation of epithelial cells on the posterior capsule. Most extracapsular surgeons will agree that the fewer plaques and epithelial cells remaining on the capsule the smaller the potential for opacification. Two instruments commonly used for capsular cleaning are the Kratz scratcher (first described in 1972 by Dr. Richard Kratz, Van Nuys, Ca., personal communication) and the 0.5-mm chalazion curette (first described in 1973 by Dr. James Gill, New Port Richey, Fl., personal communication). The Kratz scratcher is available in two forms: The original design was sand-blasted and the more recent has a...
and-impregnated surface, the latter being more effective. Since 1972, the trend has gone full circle, with surgeons returning to the sand-blasted surface to take advantage of the increased safety margin. The instrument is ideal for removing epithelial cells and loosely adherent plaques. For larger, adherent plaques, the ion curette is better able to achieve edge separation and permits more rapid removal.

It occurred to us that by sand-blasting the back of the ion curette, the resultant instrument would have the same advantage as the previous instruments. We have this modified curette and found cleaning of the posterior capsule to be an easier and less time-consuming task. The instrument* is shown in Figure 1.

*Manufactured by Storz Instrument Co., 3365 Tree Industrial Blvd., St. Louis, Mo. 63122.

REFERENCES