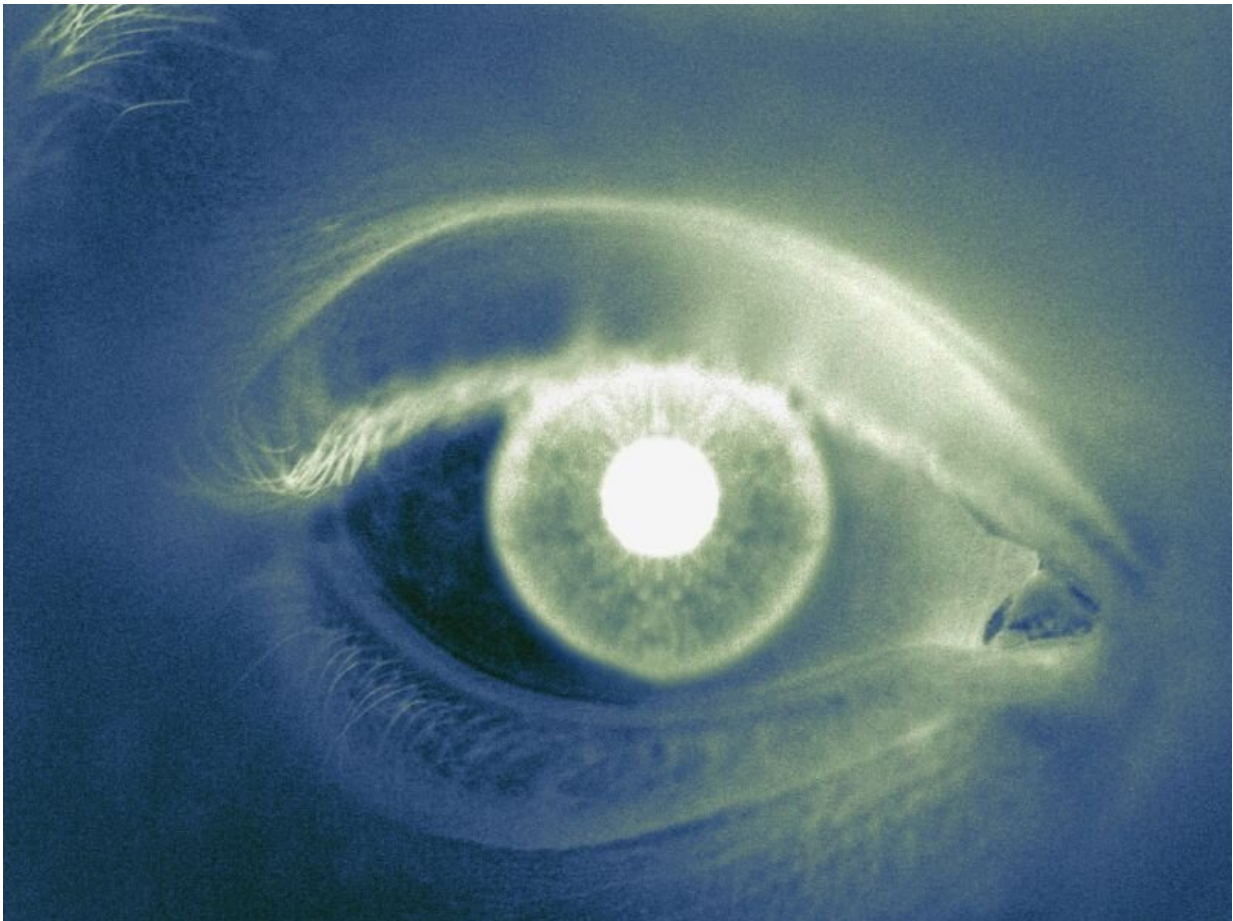


Frequency of urgent vitreoretinal surgery down during pandemic

March 5 2021



(HealthDay)—The frequency of urgent or emergent vitreoretinal

surgical procedures decreased during the COVID-19 pandemic, according to a study published online March 4 in *JAMA Ophthalmology*.

Noting that the American Academy of Ophthalmology indicated that urgent or emergent vitreoretinal surgical procedures should continue during the COVID-19 pandemic, Mark P. Breazzano, M.D., from the Columbia University Irving Medical Center in New York City, and colleagues examined whether the frequency of these procedures changed. The frequency of 11 billed vitreoretinal codes was obtained from 17 institutions between Jan. 1, 2019, and May 31, 2020. Procedures were clustered into intravitreal injections, lasers and cryotherapy, [retinal detachment](#) (RD) repairs, and other vitrectomies.

The researchers observed a weekly institutional decrease in injections from March 30 to May 2, 2020, relative to 2019, with a maximal decrease of 38.6 percent from April 6 to 12, 2020. Weekly decreases that spanned a longer period, at least until study conclusion, were identified for lasers and cryotherapy (maximal decrease of 79.6 percent from April 6 to 12, 2020), RD repairs (maximal decrease of 59.4 percent from April 13 to 19, 2020), and other vitrectomies (maximal decrease of 84.3 percent from April 6 to 12, 2020).

"It remains unclear what the ultimate long-term effects will be from the decrease in urgent or emergent surgical procedures across the U.S., and whether the decrease will be sustained during the COVID-19 resurgences," the authors write. "The [clinical outcomes](#) from these decreases cannot be determined at this time."

Several authors disclosed financial ties to biopharmaceutical and medical device companies.

More information: [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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