

Retina - Basics

What is the retina?

The retina is the delicate, light-sensitive tissue that covers the interior wall of the eye. Like the film in a camera, it receives images projected through the lens of the eye. The retina then sends these images to your brain through the optic nerve. When the retina is damaged, your vision may become impaired. Damage to the retina may be caused by injury, illness or as a result of aging.

What is the vitreous?

The vitreous is a gel-like substance that fills the back cavity of the eye and is loosely attached to the retina.

What is a Vitreo-Retinal specialist?

Retinal specialists are eye physicians and surgeons who focus on diseases in the back of the eye such as macular degeneration, diabetic disease, retinal detachment, eye trauma and intraocular infection

Who are at higher risk of retina problems?

Person having high numbers(High Myopia), diabetis, hypertension, kidney problems, pregnancy and those who has family history of retina problems are at higher risk to develop retina problems. They should check their retina asap.

Is retina check up –a must for everyone?

Yes because very often ,you may not have any symptoms .

What are the symptoms?

Floaters, flashes of light ,decreased vision, distorted central vision and frequent change of glass numbers. If you have any of these, get your retina checked up.

What are floaters?

Floaters are cobwebs, strings, or speck-like objects that float in the field of vision. They may occur from any opacity within the vitreous gel that casts a shadow on the retina. They are usually black and may float in and out of view. Floaters can be an indicator that the gel-like vitreous is liquefying, which is a normal ageing process but can also reflect inflammation, infection, or bleeding within the eye or be related to systemic diseases.

What is a post vitreous detachment (PVD)?

A posterior vitreous detachment is a separation of the vitreous gel from the inner back wall of the eye and is usually associated with floaters and flashing lights. Liquefaction of the vitreous gel is usually an age related change that continues until the vitreous separates from the retina to which it is loosely attached. The vast majority of PVDs do not cause problems except annoying floaters and sometimes brief flashes of light. Improvement in symptoms is usually seen within a few months. Occasionally retinal tears can occur from a PVD. Retinal tears can lead to a detached retina if the retinal tear is not treated. There is no way to tell if a PVD caused a retinal tear so if someone has symptoms of a PVD, they need a prompt dilated retinal exam.

What is a retinal detachment?

When the retina detaches, it separates or pulls away from its normal position lining the inner back wall of the eye. A retinal detachment can occur from retina holes, retinal tears or from traction on the retina from scar tissue on the retinal surface or in the vitreous gel. If not promptly treated, a retinal detachment can cause permanent loss of vision.

What are the symptoms of retinal detachment?

Symptoms include flashing lights, new floaters or a sudden or gradual increase in either the number and or severity of floaters, which are like cobwebs, strings or specks that float about in your field of vision. Another symptom is the appearance of a curtain over the field of vision, typically starting in the periphery and progressing towards the center part of the visual field. A retinal detachment is a medical emergency. Anyone experiencing the symptoms of a retinal detachment should see an eye care professional immediately.

Who is at risk for retinal detachment?

A retinal detachment can occur at any age, but it is more common in people over age 40. It affects men more than women. A retinal detachment is also more likely to occur in people who are nearsighted or have had a retinal detachment in the other eye, a family history of retinal detachment, cataract surgery, an eye injury or certain systemic diseases.

How is the retina problem diagnosed?

A thorough clinical check up by the retina specialist is required. If required, he may advise you for specific tests such as OCT(Optical Coherence Tomography), Fluorescein angiography etc.to diagnose the problem.

How can vitreo-retinal problems be treated?

Problems with the retina and vitreous including retinal tear, retinal detachment, severe intraocular infection, eye disease and trauma can lead to vision loss and even blindness. Surgery, lasers and injections can correct problems before vision is lost, prevent further deterioration from occurring and often restore vision.