

Retinal Detachment

Retinal detachment is the term used to describe a separation of the retinal membrane (retina) in the back of the eye from the underlying tissue layers.



It is serious, requires medical attention within 24 hours of the first symptoms, and can cause permanent loss of vision or blindness if not treated.

Anyone experiencing the symptoms of a retinal detachment should see an optometrist immediately or contact the emergency department of their local hospital.

Symptoms of detached retina can include the gradual or sudden onset of:

- Bright flashes of light, especially on the edges of vision (peripheral),
- Blurred vision,
- Floaters in the eye,
- Shadow encroaching in the field of vision, or
- Blindness in a part of the vision in one eye.

A retinal detachment can occur to anyone at any age, but it is more likely to occur in people over 40 and those who:

- Are extremely myopic
- Have a family history of retinal detachment
- Have already had a retinal detachment in the other eye
- Have had cataract surgery
- Have had an eye injury

It may not be possible to prevent a retinal detachment but sensible precautions include:

- Using protective eye wear to prevent eye trauma,
- Controlling your blood sugar if you have diabetes,
- Having a comprehensive eye exam at least once a year, and
- Being alert to new symptoms of:
 - * flashes of light,
 - * floaters, and/or
 - * shadows or shapes in field of vision.



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