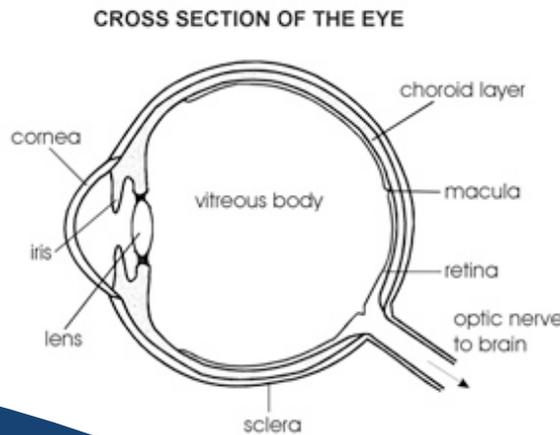




## Why Visit A Retina Specialist?

Here are the most common conditions a prospective patient might experience:

**FLOATERS AND FLASHES:** Small particles consisting of cells or pigment that move in the vitreous. Floaters have been described by patients as seeing bugs crawling on the walls or flies moving across their face or within their field of vision. They can be in the shape of dots or spider webs; even hair like. Floaters may be symptoms of inflammation in the eye, bleeding in the eye and a vitreous or retina detachment. Flashing in the eye may be of different intensity as well as size and shape. A bright light on the corner of the eye which last a split second each time and repeats in various intervals. This is usually more prominent in dark lighting and is typically caused by a pull on the retina by a vitreous tear and/or retina tear/detachment. If these symptoms occur, a patient should see a retina specialist immediately to have their retina examined and treated to minimize further damage.



### AGE RELATED MACULAR

**DEGENERATION (ARMD):** This disease affects the central (reading) vision by damaging the retina. There are two forms of ARMD. The dry form is an age related change beneath the retina that can cause slow loss of vision. The wet form is a more severe form of the disease that involves new blood vessel growth beneath the retina resulting in bleeding and swelling in the retina and visual distortion and impairment. A common symptom of ARMD is blurred reading vision or distortion of straight lines. There are several treatment options now available for ARMD, with more being developed each year.

**RETINAL VEIN OCCLUSION:** The blood vessels of the retina can become occluded. Vein occlusion is more common than artery occlusion and is more likely to occur in patients with hypertension or diabetes or in patients with an abnormal tendency to form blood clots. When the retinal veins become blocked, bleeding and swelling occur within the retina leading to distorted and blurred vision. Treatment for these problems depends on the location and severity of the occlusion.

**RETINAL DETACHMENT:** The retina can detach from the back of the eye, leading to rapid visual loss. This is often seen as a curtain clouding part of the vision. Retinal detachments occur from retinal breaks that develop during vitreous detachment or from diseases such as diabetes or viral infection within the eye. Patients should be examined by a retina specialist so that surgical treatment can be discussed and initiated.

### DIABETIC AND HYPERTENSIVE

**RETINOPATHY:** Both diseases (when not controlled properly) may cause damage to the smallest blood vessels in the brain, kidneys, heart as well as the eyes. Ophthalmologists can fortunately see the blood vessel damage directly within the eyes and treat it accordingly. Various studies have proven that early detection and treatment of diabetic retinopathy prevents further loss of vision.

**UVEITIS:** This is the inflammation of the uveal tract which is the vascular coat of the eyeball. Some of the symptoms include the following: light sensitivity, blurred vision, pain, floaters, and redness in the eye. There are many reasons why one may develop uveitis. Some of the causes include:

- a viral infection, such as shingles, mumps, or herpes simplex;
- a fungus, such as histoplasmosis;
- a parasite, such as toxoplasmosis;
- related disease in other parts of the body, such as gastrointestinal disease (Crohn's disease, inflammatory bowel disease) arthritis (rheumatoid, psoriatic), vascular disease;
- a result from an injury to an eye.

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