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Posterior Vitreous Detachment

Information for patients

This leaflet is available in audio, Braille, large print and other languages. To request a copy, please ask a member of staff.

Eye Care Centre
Leighton Hospital
Middlewich Road
Crewe, Cheshire
CW1 4QJ



What is Posterior Vitreous Detachment?

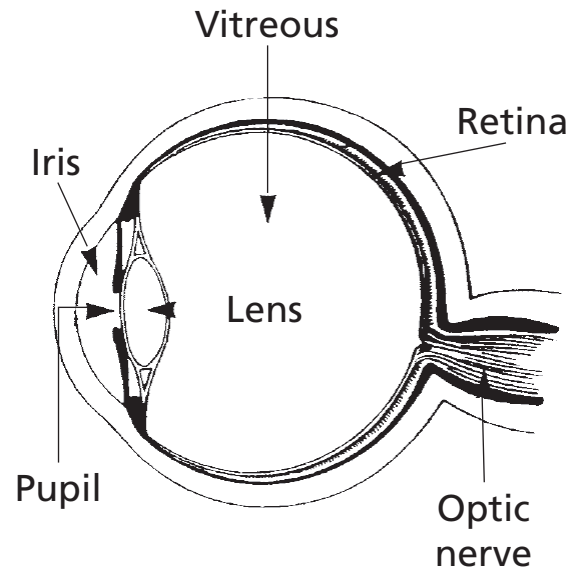
The main part of the eye behind the lens is full of a jelly-like substance, this is the vitreous. In middle age (or earlier in short sighted people) the vitreous jelly contracts leaving fluid between it and the retina.

(The retina is the light sensitive layer at the back of the eye).

As the jelly contracts it can pull away from the retina causing flashing lights and floating spots, often spidery in shape. Occasionally the pulling of the jelly on the retina produces a retinal tear which may lead to a condition called a retinal detachment.

This may cause a large shower of new floaters, multiple flashing lights and/or a 'curtain' of missing vision.

Cross section of the eye



Will it affect my vision?

The floaters and cobwebs are troublesome but harmless. Although they may not go away, they tend to become less bothersome with time.

Is there any treatment?

Not usually as the symptoms become less troublesome with time.

What if my symptoms change?

You must contact your GP immediately if you develop any of the following:

- A sudden shower of new floaters.
- Increasing or new episode of flashing lights.
- A 'curtain' of missing vision.

For further help and information

We hope that this leaflet has helped you to understand Posterior Vitreous Detachment.

If you have any questions or concerns, please telephone Leighton Hospital Switchboard on 01270 255141 and ask for the Eye Care Bleep holder on 2080. Available Monday to Friday, 8.30am – 4.30pm. Outside these times, please ask for the doctor on call.