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# Retinal Detachment

## Signs & Symptoms

### **Retinal Detachment (RD)**

The retina is a thin layer of tissue in the back of the eye. It helps you see the images that are focused on it by the cornea and the lens.

- The most common type of retinal detachments are often due to a tear or hole in the retina. Eye fluids may leak through this opening. This causes the retina to separate from the underlying tissues, much like a bubble under wallpaper. This is most often caused by a condition called posterior vitreous detachment. However, it may also be caused by trauma and very bad nearsightedness. A family history of retinal detachment also increases your risk. It can also be a complication experienced after cataract surgery.
- Another type of retinal detachment is called tractional detachment. This is seen in people who have uncontrolled diabetes, previous retinal surgery, or have chronic inflammation.

When the retina becomes detached, bleeding from area blood vessels may cloud the inside of the eye, which is normally filled with vitreous fluid. Central vision becomes severely affected if the macula, the part of the retina responsible for fine vision, becomes detached.

### **What are the symptoms of retinal detachment?**

Early symptoms that may indicate a retinal detachment are:

- Bright flashes of light, especially in peripheral vision
- Translucent specks of various shapes (floaters) in the eye
- Blurred vision
- Shadow or blindness in a part of the visual field of one eye, like a curtain or veil is covering all or part of your vision.

The symptoms may occur gradually or quite suddenly. They do not always mean a retinal detachment is present, but you should see your eye doctor immediately if any of these signs occur.

### **Why is it important to receive immediate evaluation and care of a retinal detachment?**

The longer one waits for treatment, the greater the chance that the retinal detachment will become more severe. The more severe the detachment, the less vision may return. Any surgery has its risks; however an untreated retinal detachment usually results in permanent, severe vision loss or blindness.