

# RETINAL DETACHMENT



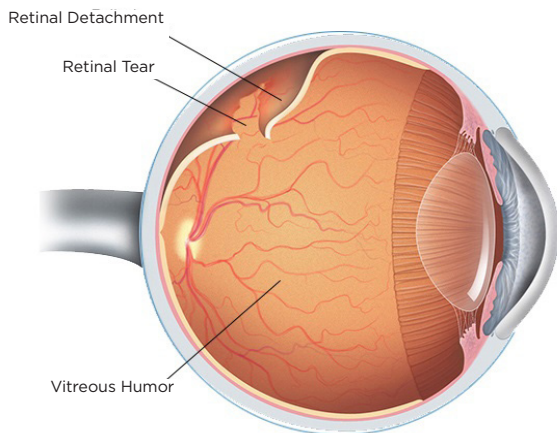
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# RETINAL DETACHMENT

A retinal detachment is an uncommon but serious eye condition in which the retina separates from the inner lining within the eye, often associated with holes or tears.

It is a problem that occurs most frequently in the middle-aged and elderly.



## CAUSES OF RETINAL DETACHMENTS

There are many causes of retinal detachments but most do not have any clear precipitating factor. They are more common among patients with myopia (nearsightedness) and those with a family history of retinal detachment. In New Zealand, around 400 cases occur every year.

## SYMPTOMS

The early symptoms of a detachment may include flashes of light and the sudden appearance of floaters. Many people have floaters, which have been present for many years and are not a cause for concern. If a retinal detachment occurs, a visual field defect can usually be noticed as a “curtain” or “shadow” appearing in the peripheral vision and such a symptom should be taken seriously.

### Normal Vision



### Vision with Retinal Detachment



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### Signs and symptoms include:

- Light flashes
- 'Wavy' or 'watery' vision
- Veil or curtain obstructing vision
- Shower of floaters that resemble spots, bugs or spider webs
- Sudden decrease of vision

### DEGREE OF URGENCY

Patients with retinal detachment symptoms should urgently contact their eye specialist. If the 'shadow' does not involve the central field of vision, retinal detachment repair should be carried out as soon as possible. If the central vision has already been affected the timing of surgery is less crucial.

### SURGERY

The surgical principles involve reattaching the retina on the inside of the eye. A laser is used to "spot weld" the retina back on and often a gas bubble is placed inside the eye to help stabilise the retina while it is healing. If a gas bubble is used the patient's head must be positioned in such a way that the bubble is placed where it can support the healing retina. The gas usually takes about 10 days to reabsorb and air travel is not advisable during this period.

Auckland Eye is New Zealand's centre of excellence for eye care, with a totally tailored approach that provides the best possible outcome for patients. Our team of leading experts are highly trained in their specialist fields, providing assessment and management of a comprehensive range of eye conditions.

Combined with Oasis Surgical – Auckland's premier eye surgery facility – we offer superior treatment and world-class care in a relaxed, friendly environment. Both centres are independently accredited against EQUIP 5 standards for excellence in patient care and services.

Auckland Eye is centrally located in Remuera, with easy motorway access, plentiful off-street parking and wheelchair access. There are additional dedicated consulting facilities in Takapuna and New Lynn, as well as appointments available at a wide range of other locations across the Auckland region.

Auckland Eye is an affiliated provider to Southern Cross Health Society.

**For more information on Retinal Detachment, please contact our friendly specialist team.**

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