

## Retinal Detachment

### Retinal Vein Occlusions

Your retina is the back part of your eye, the part on which light and images focus before being sent to the brain. A retinal vein occlusion is a blockage in a vein in the retina.

The blockage obstructs adequate blood flow to the affected area and also causes the walls of the vein to leak blood and fluid into the retina. Excess blood can leak into the macula, the center area of the retina that is responsible for fine detail vision. The blood can collect there and cause swelling (called macular edema).

In addition to bleeding and swelling, when retinal blood vessels don't operate as they should, neovascularization may occur. Neovascularization is the growth of fragile, abnormal blood vessels. They can bleed into the vitreous, the jelly-like fluid in the center of the eye.

There are two types of occlusion...

- ◆ **Central retinal vein occlusion (CRVO)** – The main retinal vein is blocked, causing poor blood flow throughout the retina.
- ◆ **Branch regional vein occlusion (BRVO)** – A small branch of the main vein becomes blocked, causing poor blood flow to that area of the retina.

### Symptoms

The main symptom of retinal vein occlusion is blurred vision. Floaters (spots), caused by leakage into the vitreous, can also appear and interfere with vision.

The amount of vision loss with retinal vein occlusion varies. With BRVO, loss may not be severe, but with CRVO, vision loss is frequently severe and rapid. There may also be eye pain with CRVO, caused by excessive pressure within the eye.

If you are experiencing any of these symptoms, please call us immediately to schedule a comprehensive eye exam. The damage caused by many eye conditions and diseases can be stopped or prevented with early diagnosis and treatment.

### Causes

Retinal vein occlusion is common in those who have glaucoma, diabetes, age-related vascular disease, high blood pressure and blood disorders.



## **Treatment**

We use a complete eye examination and possibly a fluorescein angiography and blood tests to diagnose retinal vein occlusion.

There is no cure for retinal vein occlusion. Sometimes no treatment is needed because the bleeding and excess fluid subsides on its own.

Laser surgery is an option for some patients who have BRVO, macula edema or new blood vessel growth. Usually, the vision that is lost does not return,

Laser surgery is not as helpful for macula edema caused by CRVO, but may be required if abnormal blood vessel growth is found. Certain injections of medication into the eye can also be helpful in treatment.

In addition to eye care, it's very important that you receive the appropriate treatment for any medical conditions you have, such as glaucoma or diabetes, that may put you at risk for retinal vein occlusion. Because vision treatment does not always help and because vision loss may be permanent, it is better to treat those at risk for retinal vein occlusion before damage is done.

Call us today for a consultation.