



Floaters

Floaters are small moving spots/shapes/shadows that appear in the visual field.

Causes

Vitreous, the jelly like transparent substance in the eye, degenerates with age and this is a normal aging process.

During the degeneration, the irregularities and condensation formed in the vitreous will cast shadows (the floaters) on the retina.

Floaters can also be due to bleeding into the vitreous. This is more common in diabetic patients with severe diabetic mellitus retinopathy of which new and fragile vessels grow on the retina.

Other rarer cause of floaters is inflammation of the eye.

Signs / Symptoms

Something floating like tiny spot, shot line segment, circle or a net can be seen by patient. The floater may follow the patient's gaze and it may become more prominent when patient looks at white background or the sky.

Occasionally floater can be the symptom of retinal detachment. Patient may see floaters, flashes or distorted images.

Treatment

Floater itself is harmless and no treatment is needed and usually it will become less obvious with time.

However, if there is sudden increase of

- Floaters
- Flashes
- Occurrence of distorted images
- Blurred vision

Prompt medical attention is necessary.

The ophthalmologist will examine and assess the causes of floaters. In case of retinal detachment or vitreous haemorrhage, patient may need surgery or laser treatment.

The information is for general education purpose and reference only.

Should you have any queries, please consult medical professionals

Specialty Advisory Group (Ophthalmology)

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