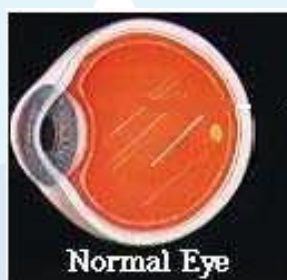


Information for Patients

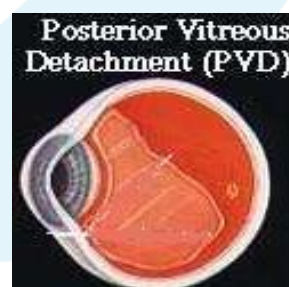
Posterior Vitreous Detachment (PVD)

What is posterior vitreous detachment?

The eye is filled with a jelly like substance called vitreous, a fluid that maintains the shape of the eye, supplies it with nutrition and helps with the focusing of light. The vitreous is attached loosely to the surface of the retina (photographic membrane at the back of the eye) in the early part of life. In middle age (or earlier in short-sighted people), the vitreous jelly may shrink and pull away from the retina, known as a posterior vitreous detachment. Usually this does not cause lasting problems; however, patients may experience flashing lights and floaters (spots or thread like strands) which are often described as cobwebs or a lace curtain.



Vitreous attached to surface of the retina



Vitreous pulls away from the retina

Will it affect my vision?

The floaters are annoying but are harmless and once the brain gets used to them they become less annoying. However, occasionally the pulling of the jelly on the retina produces a retinal tear. If the tear is left untreated, fluid can leak through the tear and cause detachment of your retina. Retinal detachment produces the symptom of a dark shadow in your vision, and eye surgery is required to prevent blindness.

During your eye examination, the doctor has performed a thorough assessment and found no indication of a retinal tear or a retinal detachment.

Can anything be done?

Unfortunately, nothing can be done about the floaters though they may become less annoying with time. However, if you develop:

- A shower of new floaters
- A curtain coming across the vision
- New flashing lights

you should contact your local Emergency Eye Department.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact Manchester Royal Eye Hospital on (0161) 276 5597 between 8.00am - 9.00pm every day. If your problem is urgent and you are unable to get an answer, please ring Ward 55 on (0161) 276 5512 available 24 hours every day.