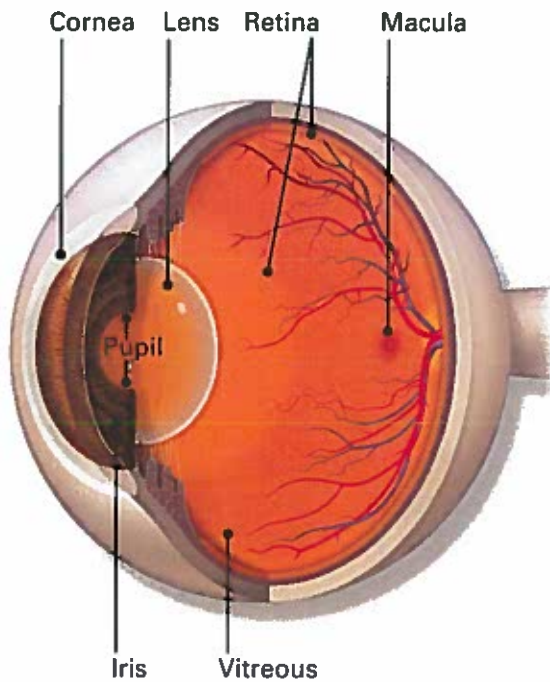


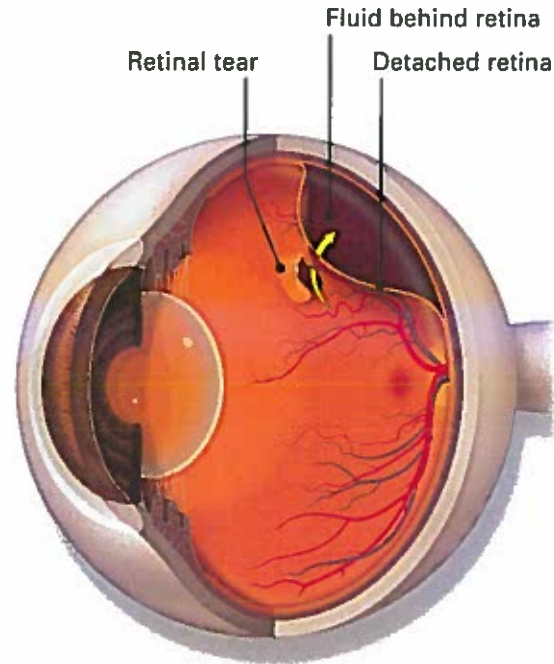
## Detached Retina

### What is a detached retina?

A detached retina is when the retina lifts away from the back of the eye. The retina does not work when it is detached, making vision blurry. A detached retina is a serious problem. You must have it treated right away or you could lose sight in that eye.



Anatomy of the eye



### 👁 Eye Words to Know

**Retina:** Layer of nerve cells lining the back wall inside the eye. This layer senses light and sends signals to the brain so you can see.

**Vitreous:** Jelly-like substance that fills the middle of the eye.

**Floater:** Tiny clumps of cells or other material inside the vitreous. These look like small specks, strings or clouds moving in your field of vision.

### How do you get a detached retina?

As we get older, the vitreous in our eyes starts to shrink and get thinner. As the eye moves, the vitreous moves around on the retina without causing problems. But sometimes the vitreous may stick to the retina and pull hard enough to tear it. When that happens, fluid can pass through the tear and lift (detach) the retina.

## Who is at risk for a detached retina?

You are more likely to have a detached retina if you:

- need glasses to see far away (are nearsighted)
- have had cataract surgery
- have glaucoma (a disease affecting pressure inside the eye)
- had a serious eye injury
- had a retinal tear or detachment in your other eye
- have family members who had retinal detachment
- have weak areas in your retina (seen by an eye doctor during an exam)

## Early signs of a detached retina

A detached retina has to be treated right away. Otherwise, you could lose vision in that eye. Call an ophthalmologist right away if you have any of these symptoms:

- Seeing flashing lights all of a sudden. Some people say this is like seeing stars after being hit in the eye.
- Noticing many new floaters at once. These can look like specks, lines or cobwebs in your field of vision.
- A shadow appearing in your peripheral (side) vision.
- A gray curtain covering part of your field of vision.

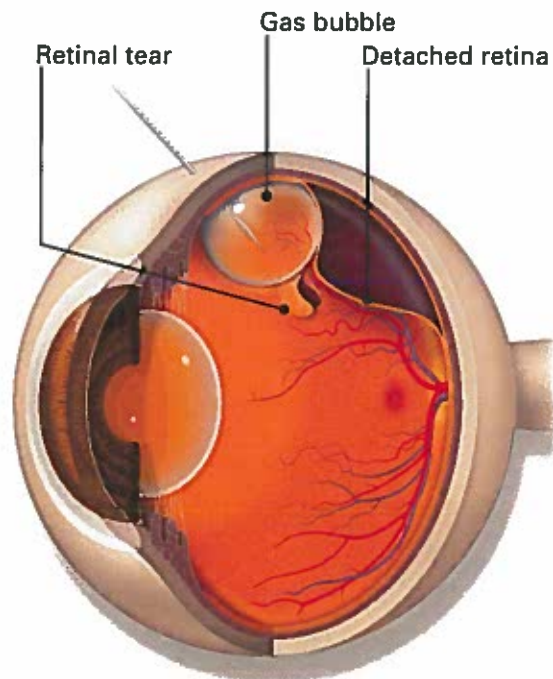
## How is a detached retina diagnosed?

Your ophthalmologist will put drops in your eye to dilate (widen) the pupil. Then they will look through a special lens to check your retina for any changes.

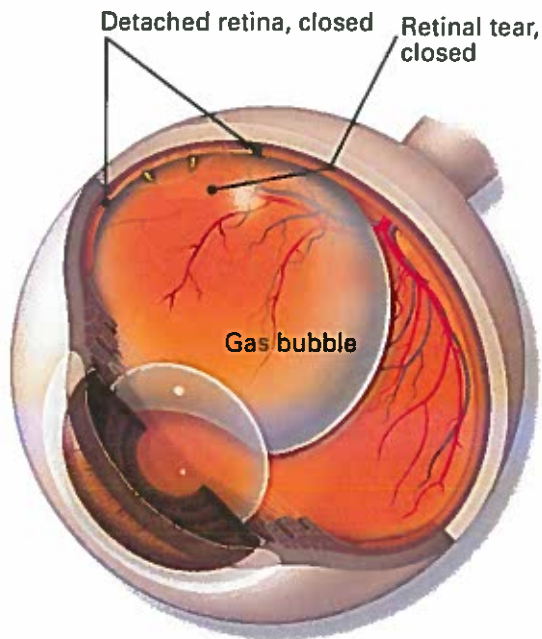
## How is a detached retina treated?

The only way to treat a detached retina is with surgery. Here are some types of surgery to fix a detached retina:

**Pneumatic retinopexy.** Your ophthalmologist puts a gas bubble inside your eye. This pushes the retina into place so it can heal properly. Afterwards, you will need to keep your head "face down" for a few days. This keeps the bubble in the right place. As your eye heals, your body



A gas bubble is injected into the vitreous.

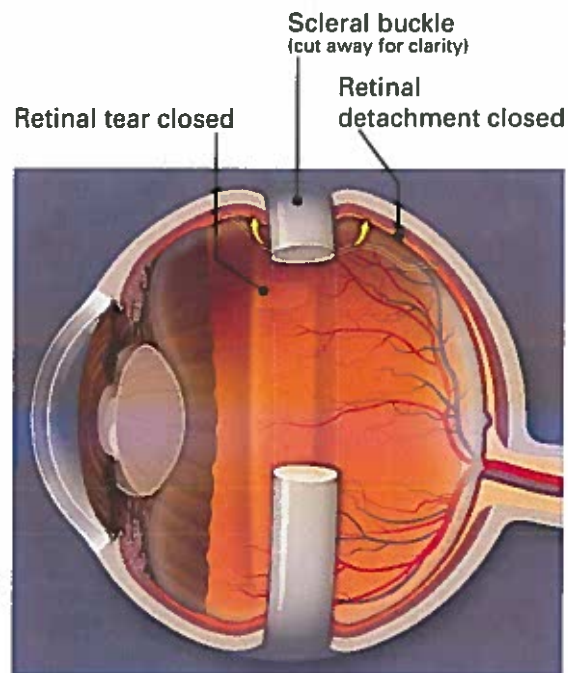


With your head held steady in the right position, the gas bubble holds the retinal detachment closed.

makes fluid that fills the eye. Over time, this fluid replaces the gas bubble.

**Vitrectomy.** Your ophthalmologist removes the vitreous pulling on the retina. The vitreous will be replaced with a gas or oil bubble. The bubble pushes the retina into place so it can heal properly. If an oil bubble is used, your ophthalmologist will remove it a few months later. With a gas bubble, you cannot fly in an airplane. This is because altitude change causes the gas to expand, increasing eye pressure.

**Scleral buckle.** A band of rubber or soft plastic is sewn to the outside of your eyeball. It gently presses the eye inward. This helps the detached retina heal against the eye wall. You will not see the scleral buckle on the eye. It is usually left on the eye permanently.



## What are the risks of surgery for detached retina?

All surgery has risks of problems. But if you do not treat a detached retina, you could quickly lose your sight. Here are some of the risks of surgery for detached retina:

- Eye infection
- Bleeding in your eye
- Glaucoma, when pressure increases inside the eye
- Cataract, when the lens in your eye becomes cloudy
- Need for a second surgery
- Chance that the retina does not reattach properly
- Chance that the retina detaches again

Your ophthalmologist will discuss these and other risks and how surgery can help you.

## Things to expect after surgery:

- You might have some pain for a few hours after surgery. You will be given pain medicine to help you feel better.
- You need to rest and be less active after surgery for a few weeks. Your ophthalmologist will tell you when you can exercise, drive or do other things again.
- You will need to wear an eye patch after surgery. Be sure to wear it as long as your doctor tells you to.
- If a bubble was put in your eye, you will need to keep your head in one position for about 1–2 weeks. Your doctor will tell you what that position is. It is very important to follow the directions so your eye heals.
- You might see floaters and flashing lights for a few weeks after surgery. You may also notice the bubble in your eye.
- Your sight should begin to improve about four weeks after surgery. It could take months after surgery for your vision to stop changing. Also, your retina may still be healing for a year or more after surgery.

For more about detached retina, scan this code with your smartphone or visit <http://bit.ly/detachedretina>.



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## Summary

A detached retina is when your retina lifts away from the back of the eye. You may see flashing lights or many new floaters. Or you may see a shadow in your side vision. Also, a gray curtain might cover part of your field of vision. If you have any of these signs, call an ophthalmologist right away. A detached retina must be treated immediately to keep your vision.

## COMPLIMENTS OF:

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