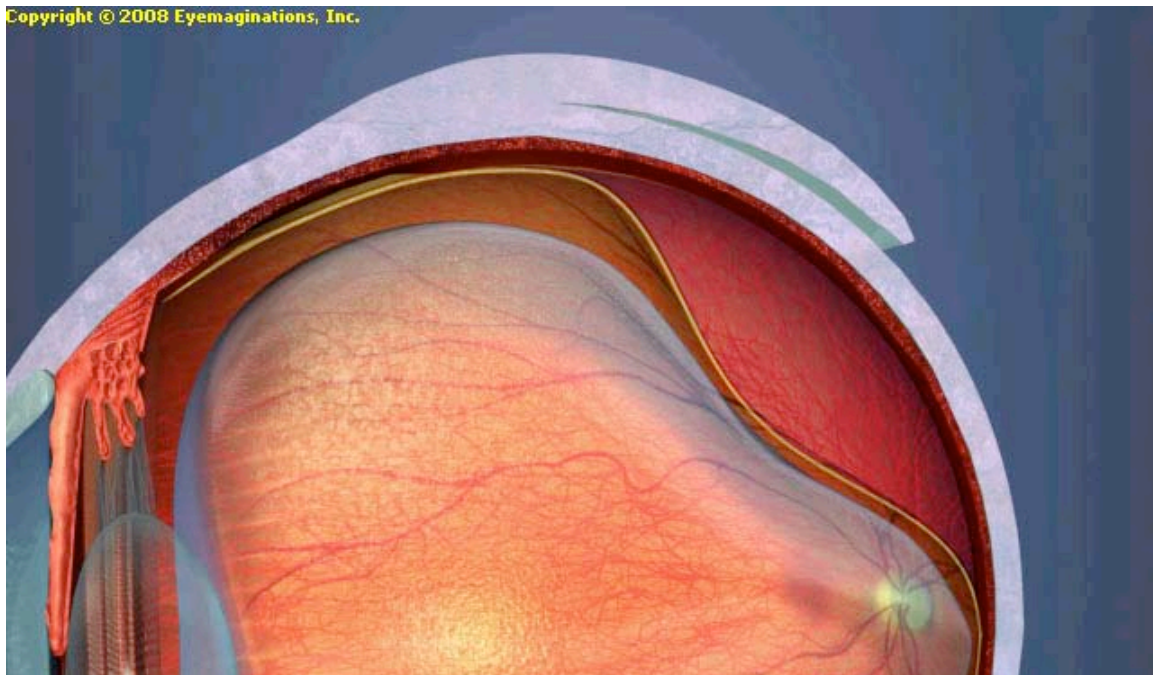


## Retinal Detachment:

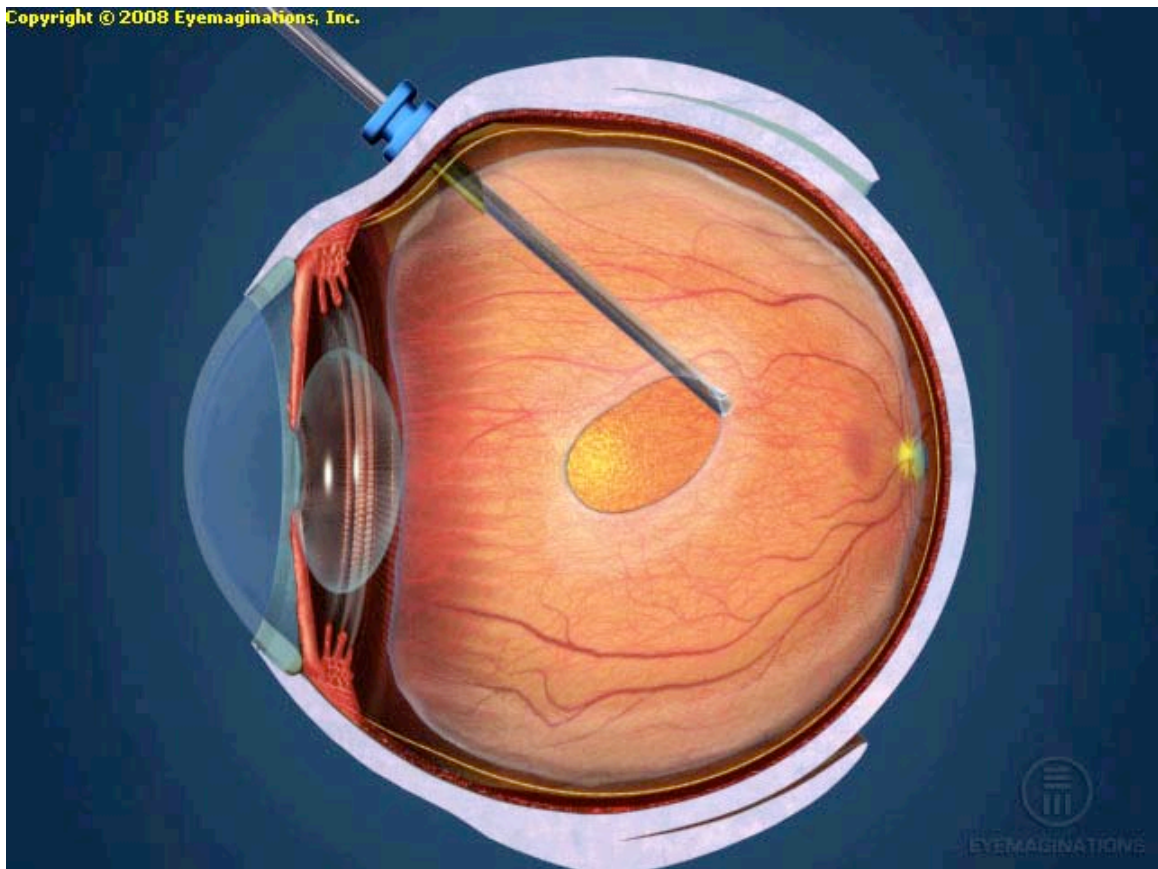
The retina is the light sensitive tissue that lines the inside of the eye and sends signals to the brain. When the retina detaches, it is pulled away from the choroid layer, which is a thin layer of blood vessels that nourishes the retina and supplies it with oxygen. The longer a retina is detached from the underlying layer, the longer it is deprived of oxygen which in turn can lead to permanent vision loss. Symptoms of a retinal detachment are: the sudden onset of many floaters or spots floating in the vision, flashing lights, a shadow or curtain covering a portion of the vision, sudden blur in the vision.

A retinal detachment is more likely to occur in people who are nearsighted or have relatives who have had a retinal detachment, have lattice degeneration, or have had an intraocular surgery such as cataract surgery. A detachment can occur as a result of the vitreous, the jelly-like fluid in the eye, shrinking and causing a tear in the retina. The primary cause of a retinal detachment is a posterior vitreous detachment. A posterior detachment occurs when the vitreous within the eye shrinks and contracts and pulls away from the retina. As the vitreous pulls away, portions of the vitreous will not fully detach from the retina where it can cause a tear in the retina. When a tear occurs it creates a hole in the retina where vitreous fluid can leak beneath the retina and cause an accumulation of fluid. Usually, retinal detachments will start in the periphery of the retina and as fluid accumulates under the detached retina, the detachment will progress toward the area of central vision. Retina detachments can also occur as a result of trauma, advanced diabetes, or inflammatory disorders.



*The above diagram shows a cross-section of a retinal detachment.*

The only effective treatment of retinal detachments is by surgery. If a retinal tear has not progressed to a detachment or is small and localized, then it can be treated by an in-office laser surgery treatment. Laser surgery can usually prevent a retinal detachment and preserve almost all vision. Depending on the severity of the retinal detachment, the vision might not return fully following a surgical repair of the retina. If untreated, a retinal detachment can result in total vision loss, thus it is important be checked by your doctor at the first signs of a retinal detachment.



*The above diagram depicts how the vitreous is removed from the eye during vitrectomy surgery.*