

# Choroidal Nevus

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This material will give you an overview of what a choroidal nevus is and how it may affect your eye.

## **What is a choroidal nevus?**

A choroidal nevus (plural: nevi) is similar to a birthmark or mole that occurs inside of the eye. Just like these marks can occur on your skin, they can also appear on parts of your eye. A choroidal nevus refers specifically to a mark that forms in the choroid, a layer of the eye behind the retina.

## **What causes a choroidal nevus?**

A nevus is caused by the growth of cells called melanocytes. These cells produce the colors of your skin, hair, and eyes. In your eye, the melanocytes behind your retina are normally spread out evenly. Sometimes, these cells will clump together and form a dark spot. This spot is called a nevus.

## **Should I be worried if I have a choroidal nevus?**

Choroidal nevi are common and occur in about 5-10% of the population. Even though most nevi do not affect vision or cause any problems, they should still be watched regularly. Just like a skin mole can become cancerous, an eye nevus could do the same. It is important to have your choroidal nevus examined by an eye doctor at least once a year to look for any changes.

If you should experience blurred vision or any other vision changes, you should alert your eye doctor as this could be a sign of change.

## **Should I have my choroidal nevus treated?**

Most choroidal nevi do not require treatment. Some nevi have features that make them more likely to grow into a melanoma (a type of cancer). For example, if your nevus is particularly large or thick or has orange coloring, there is a greater chance of it becoming cancerous. Your eye doctor will observe your nevus carefully and may take pictures of it to help document any changes.

**For more information, scan this code with your smartphone or visit the website listed.**



<http://www.geteyesmart.org/eyesmart/diseases/nevus.cfm>

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