

Floaters

This material will help you understand floaters, and how they are caused and treated.

What are floaters?

Floaters look like small dots or spider webs moving through your field of vision. Floaters can have different shapes, like dots, clouds, circles, lines, or webs. They are easier to see on a bright day when you are looking at a light colored background like the sky.

What causes floaters?

When people reach middle age, the gel that fills the inside of the eye during childhood begins to liquefy. This gel is called the vitreous gel. As the vitreous gel begins to liquefy, people begin to see it as floaters.

What are the symptoms of floaters?

While most floaters are not serious, you should pay attention to the following symptoms:

- One new, large floater or “showers” of floaters that appear suddenly
- Seeing sudden, repeated flashes of light like lightening even when your eyes are closed
- Vision loss in one eye
- A shade or curtain coming down over your field of vision

See your eye doctor immediately if you have one or more of these symptoms.

How are floaters treated?

In most cases, your eye doctor will just observe your floaters. Generally, the brain gets tired of looking at the floaters and so your brain begins to ignore them. You can always bring them back into your vision by wondering where they are or concentrating and trying to see them. As long as you do not have any of the symptoms we mentioned above, your floaters will not cause you any harm. Any necessary treatment would depend on the cause of the floater.

For more information, scan these codes with your smartphone or visit the websites listed.



<http://www.geteyesmart.org/eyesmart/diseases/floaters-flashes.cfm>



<http://www.kellogg.umich.edu/patientcare/conditions/floaters.html>

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