

Ocular Lymphoma

This material will help you understand ocular lymphoma, its causes, and how it may be treated.

What is ocular lymphoma?

Lymphoma is a type of cancer that attacks the cells in your immune system.

There are 3 types of ocular lymphomas:

- **Primary vitreoretinal lymphoma:** a type of primary central nervous system lymphoma. It affects the retina, vitreous and optic nerve.
- **Primary uveal lymphoma:** affects the choroid layer in the eye.

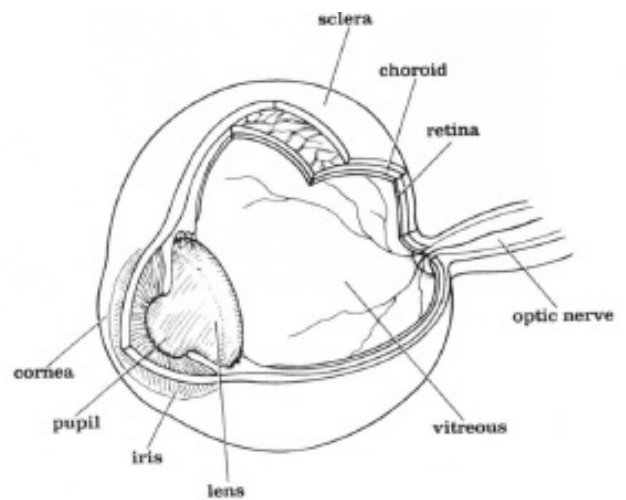


Image courtesy of the Collaborative Ocular Melanoma Study Group

- **Secondary intraocular lymphoma:** seen in patients who have systemic lymphoma. It usually involves the choroid, iris, and rarely the retina.

Common symptoms of ocular lymphoma include:

- Blurred vision
- Vision loss
- Seeing floaters
- Eye redness/swelling
- Sensitivity to light

What causes ocular lymphoma?

The exact cause of ocular lymphoma is not known. Most people who have ocular lymphoma are elderly or have an immune system problem such as AIDS. Those with rheumatoid arthritis or take anti-rejection drugs after a transplant are also at a higher risk for this disease. Genetics may also play a role in the development of ocular lymphoma. Some people may inherit a gene from their parents that increases the chance of developing this type of cancer.

How is ocular lymphoma diagnosed?

Your eye doctor will first ask you about any symptoms you have. S/he will then look inside your eye using an ophthalmoscope (a tool with a light and small magnifying glass). Your eye doctor will order some imaging testing such as photos of the fundus (back of the eye), Fluorescein angiography, or an ultrasound of the eye. This will help to get a better look at the eye. You might also need a systemic work-up, which may include a MRI of the brain and CT of the chest, abdomen, and pelvis. This will be helpful in detecting the location of the tumor and if it has spread to any other parts of the body.

A biopsy (tissue sample) is usually needed to confirm if you have ocular lymphoma. To do this, your eye doctor will perform a vitrectomy, a fine needle biopsy, or an incisional biopsy. During this procedure, the eye doctor takes a small sample from the eye. The sample may come from the vitreous (the gel-like substance that fills the eye.), retina, choroid, or iris. This sample is then sent to a lab for testing.

How is ocular lymphoma treated?

Treatment depends on whether or not the cancer is in other parts of the body. Ocular lymphoma is treated with a team of doctors including medical, neuro (brain), and radiation oncologists (cancer doctors).

Treatment options include:

- **Chemotherapy:** the use of special drugs to kill cancer cells both inside the eye and that may have spread outside the eye. It may be injected directly into the eye, into a vein, or into the spinal fluid.
- **External Radiation Therapy:** this may be directed into to the brain, spinal cord, or eye. It will help prevent the cancer from spreading or kill any cancer cells that may be there.

If there is no response to the treatment or the lymphoma comes back, your doctor may recommend a high dose of chemotherapy followed by a stem cell transplant.

You and your eye doctor will discuss the treatment plan that is best for you.

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



<http://www.geteyesmart.org/eyesmart/diseases/eye-lymphoma.cfm>



<http://www.eyecancer.com/conditions/29/intraocular-lymphoma>

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