

FLOATERS

What are Floaters?

Floaters are small dark spots, lines, or “cobweb” like objects that you may see especially when looking at a piece of white paper or the blue sky. They vary in shapes and sizes and move about in the eye.

Causes and Risk Factors of Floaters

Floaters are common and usually occur as a result of aging. The eyeball is filled with a clear gel called the “vitreous”. As a person ages, the vitreous begins to shrink. Some of the particles from the vitreous will form clumps or strands. Floaters are the shadows that these clumps cast on the retina.

Factors that can increase your risk for floaters include nearsightedness, diabetes, eye inflammation, eye injury, retinal tear or complications from cataract surgery.



Treatment of Floaters

When floaters first appear, they may be very bothersome for some people. Luckily, floaters typically fade or disappear with time and do not require any treatment. Many people also learn to live with the symptoms. Depending on the severity of the problem and the cause, some may need to consider laser treatment or surgery. It is important to discuss treatment options with an eye doctor.

If you have a sudden increase in eye floaters, accompanied by light flashes or peripheral (side) vision loss, contact your eye doctor right away as it can be a sign of a serious problem which requires immediate attention. It is important to get routine eye exams so that vision problems can be detected and treated early.

References:

<https://nei.nih.gov/health/floaters/floaters>
<http://www.allaboutvision.com/conditions/spotsfloats.htm>