

POSTERIOR VITREOUS DETACHMENT

What is Posterior Vitreous Detachment or PVD?

This is a common, degenerative change which occurs in one or both eyes of most people after middle age.

It may happen sooner in people who are Myopic, (short sighted). It can also be caused by trauma of any kind.

Everybody has a jelly filling in the vitreous cavity of both eyes. This is called the 'vitreous humour' and is situated in the back or 'posterior' segment of the eye.

In a PVD this jelly starts to shrink or 'degenerate' and pulls away from the Retina at the back of the eye.

This process can be interpreted as flashes of light or flickering.

A person may also note floaters in their vision, which can be due to clumps or filaments within the Vitreous casting shadows onto the Retina.

What happens next?

A PVD is harmless. The flashes stop with time and usually the occasional floater remains.

Floaters become less obvious as the months go by.

Very occasionally, the Vitreous, as it degenerates, can cause a hole in the Retina. This is more serious and can cause a bleed or a retinal detachment.

How do I recognise a retinal detachment?

If you have a retinal detachment you may notice:

- **Increased floaters**
- **Increased flashing lights**
- **A black, persistent, shadow at the edges of the vision in one eye.**

If any of the above happen you are advised to seek immediate advice and to contact the Ophthalmic Emergency Referral Service (Eye Casualty) on:

01603 288632

Hours of Service:	Monday – Friday	08:30 – 17:30
	Saturday	09:00 – 12:30

If you have an Ophthalmic Emergency outside of these hours please ring 01603 286286 and ask for the on-call Ophthalmologist (Eye Doctor)

Additional Information:

This information leaflet is one of a series produced for patients and is aimed at answering questions on the care of common eye conditions.

