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## **Central Retinal Vein Occlusion (CRVO)**

Central retinal vein occlusion (CRVO) blocks the main vein in the retina, the light-sensitive nerve layer at the back of the eye. The blockage causes increased pressure and the walls of the vein leak blood and excess fluid into the retina. When this fluid collects in the macula—the area of the retina responsible for central vision—vision becomes blurry. This is known as macular edema.

Floaters in your vision are another possible symptom of CRVO. When retinal blood vessels are not supply enough oxygen, the retina may grow new fragile vessels that leak blood into the vitreous, the fluid/gel that fills the center of the eye. Blood in the vitreous clumps and is seen as dark spots, or floaters, in the field of vision.

In severe cases of CRVO, the blocked vein causes painful pressure in the eye. Retinal vein occlusions commonly occur in patients with glaucoma, diabetes, age-related vascular disease, high blood pressure, and blood disorders.

The first step is finding what is causing the vein blockage. There is no cure for CRVO, but close monitoring is important. Your ophthalmologist may recommend a period of observation, since hemorrhages and excess fluid often subside on their own. Laser surgery may be effective in preventing further bleeding into the vitreous, or for treating glaucoma, but it cannot remove a hemorrhage or cure glaucoma once it is present. A new treatment option is Avastin, the treatment for wet macular degeneration. Other surgical treatments may be considered for pressure control if medication cannot keep the pressure in an acceptable range.