



Seattle Eye M.D.s

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Lattice Degeneration

Lattice degeneration is thinning and weakening of the retina, the light-sensitive layer of cells lining the back of the eye, that can lead to a retinal tear.

The vitreous, a clear gel-like substance that fills the inside of the eye, is contained in a sac loosely attached to the retina. As one ages, the vitreous takes on a more fluid consistency and the sac sometimes separates from the retina. In lattice degeneration, there are places where the sac is strongly attached to the retina and pulls on it. This pulling weakens the retina and creates lattice lesions that look like white crisscrossing lines on the retina.

If part of the vitreous sac becomes detached from the retina, the friction and pulling where it is still attached can create a tear in the retina. Lattice degeneration can sometimes cause retinal detachments when holes or tears in the lattice formation permit vitreous fluid to get under the retina.

Fortunately, most people with lattice degeneration do not develop a retinal detachment. Preventive treatment of lattice degeneration has not been shown to prevent retinal detachment, but lattice degeneration should be monitored. If you have a history of lattice degeneration, you should be aware of the symptoms of retinal tears and detachment.