



ASHFORD ADVANCED EYE CARE

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Vitreolysis:

Treatment of Vitreous Strands and Opacities (Eye Floaters)

What is Vitreolysis?

Also known as floater laser treatment, vitreolysis is a non-invasive, pain free procedure that can eliminate the visual disturbance caused by floaters. The goal of vitreolysis is to achieve a "functional improvement". That is, to allow you to return to "normal" day-to-day activities without the hindrance of floaters.

How does vitreolysis work?

"The vitreous" is the name for the jelly that fills most of the eye. Vitreolysis involves the application of nanosecond pulses of laser light to evaporate vitreous opacities and to sever vitreous strands that cause floaters. During this process, the floaters are converted into a gas. The end result is that the floater is removed and/or reduced to a size that no longer impedes vision.

What happens during the procedure?

This is performed as an outpatient day procedure at our Ashford rooms. Immediately prior to treatment, you will be administered drops to provide mild anaesthesia. A contact lens will then be placed on your eye, with the laser light delivered through a specially designed microscope.

During treatment you will likely observe small dark specks/shadows, signalling that the floaters are being evaporated into small gas bubbles. These bubbles quickly dissolve into the vitreous.

Each treatment session typically takes 20-60 minutes to perform and most patients will need to undergo 2-3 sessions in order to achieve a satisfactory result.

What can I expect after treatment?

You may observe small dark specks in your lower field of vision immediately following treatment, but these small gas bubbles will quickly dissolve. It is also important to note that some patients may experience mild discomfort, redness or temporary blurred vision directly following treatment.

Complications and side effects

Reported side effects and complications associated with vitreolysis are rare. Side effects may include cataract and a rise in pressure in the eye. Rarely there may be damage to the retina. If you wish to have the treatment our doctor will discuss the risks with you.

Who will benefit from vitreolysis?

It is necessary to undergo an ophthalmic examination to determine your eligibility for vitreolysis treatment.

- **Age:** In most cases, younger patients (under 45) suffer from microscopic floaters located close to the retina (1-2mm) and are not considered to be good candidates for vitreolysis treatment.
- **Onset of symptoms:** If your floater symptoms develop very quickly then they may be associated with Posterior Vitreous Detachment, a condition that can be treated with vitreolysis.
- **Floater Characteristics:** Large floaters situated away from the retina, are ideally suited to treatment with vitreolysis.

What is Vitreous Humor and how are Floaters formed?

Vision with Floaters



The vitreous humor is the clear, jelly-like substance in the chamber of the eye located between the lens and the retina.

At a young age the vitreous is perfectly transparent. Over time as the eye ages, this vitreous humor can degenerate, losing its form and liquefying. Without the stable vitreous humor collagen fibers collapse and bind together to form clumps and knots. It is these fibers which cast shadows on the retina and appear as spots, strings or cobwebs that are commonly referred to as "eye floaters".

In many cases as the eye ages further the vitreous humor can peel away from the retina entirely. This is known as Posterior Vitreous Detachment (PVD). PVD is often associated with a sudden increase in the number of floaters.

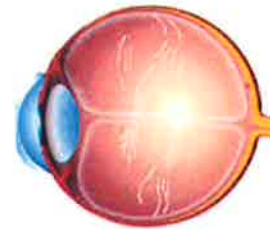
Types of Eye Floaters

Eye floaters are small pieces of debris that float in the eye's vitreous humor. This debris casts shadows onto the retina (the light-sensitive tissue layer at the back of the eye). If you have eye floaters, it is these shadows that you see "floating" across your field of vision.

Fibrous Strand Floaters:

Most common in young people, this thin, dense floater can appear as multiple dots and/or string like cobwebs and is a result of clumping of the collagen fibers of the vitreous. Depending on size and where it is located, it may be treatable with vitreolysis.

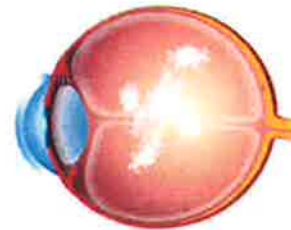
"Cobweb" Floater



Diffuse Floater:

This cloud like floater is caused by the natural aging process. Whilst this type of floater can sometimes be treated with vitreolysis, it often requires more overall treatment in order to obtain satisfactory results.

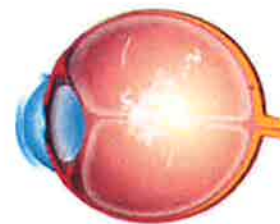
"Cloud" Floater



Weiss Ring Floater:

The ring-shaped Weiss Ring floater is a large fibrous floater that is usually located safely away from the crystalline lens and the retina. Because of this it can be treated safely and effectively with vitreolysis.

"Weiss Ring" Floater



For further information, including bookings and costs, please call our Ashford rooms on 82932700.