

# MERCURY BAY OPTOMETRIST EYE TIMES



ISSUE 29

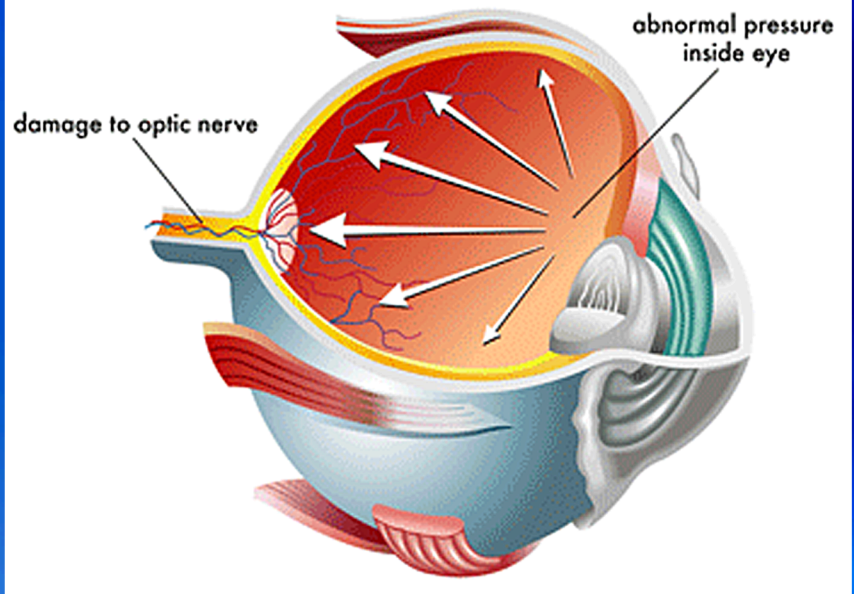
## GLAUCOMA

Glaucoma is a condition that causes damage to your eye's optic nerve and gets worse over time. It's often associated with a buildup of pressure inside the eye. Glaucoma tends to be inherited and may not show up until later in life.

The increased pressure, called intraocular pressure, can damage the optic nerve, which transmits images to the brain. If damage to the optic nerve from high eye pressure continues, glaucoma will cause permanent loss of vision. Without treatment, glaucoma can cause total permanent blindness within a few years.

Because most people with glaucoma have no early symptoms or pain from this increased pressure, it is important to see your optometrist regularly so that glaucoma can be diagnosed and treated before long-term visual loss occurs.

If you are over age 40 and have a family history of glaucoma, you should have a complete eye exam with an optometrist every one to two years. If you have health problems such as diabetes or a family history of glaucoma or are at risk for other eye diseases, you may need to visit your optometrist more frequently.

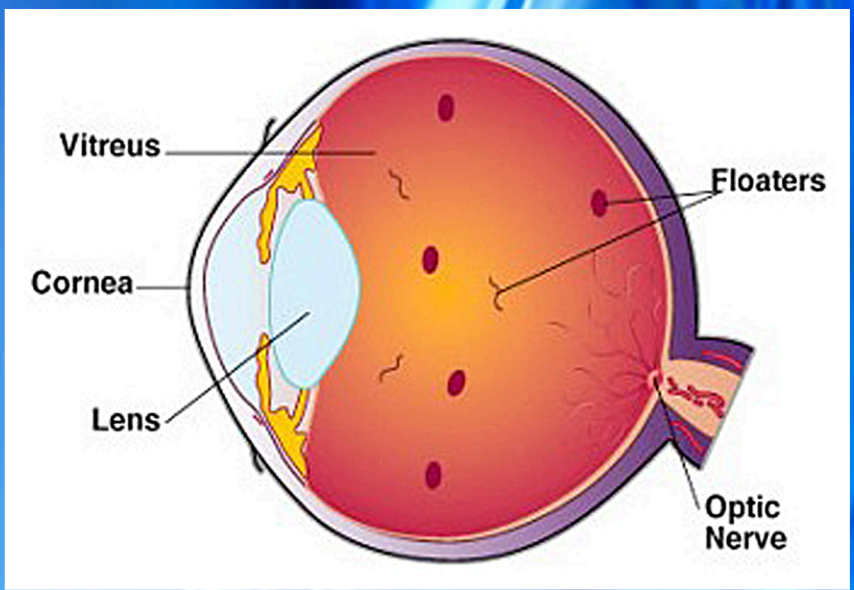


## FLOATERS & FLASHES

"Floaters" and flashes are a common sight for many people. Floaters are the specks, threads, or cobweb-like images that occasionally drift across the line of vision. Flashes are sparks or strands of light that flicker across the visual field. Both are usually harmless. But they can be a warning sign of trouble in the eye, especially when they suddenly appear or become more plentiful.

A floater is a tiny cluster of cells or fleck of protein lodged in the vitreous humour. This clear, stable gel, which looks like raw egg white, supports and fills the rear two-thirds of the eyeball. What you see isn't actually the floater itself, but the shadow it casts onto the retina. Floaters also appear more often in people who are nearsighted, those who have had cataract surgery or a previous eye injury, and those with diabetes. Flashes occur when the vitreous gel bumps, rubs, or tugs against the retina.

Like floaters, flashes are generally harmless and require no treatment however sometimes floaters and flashes signal a condition that can lead to vision loss. You should see your local optometrist if you experience either condition.

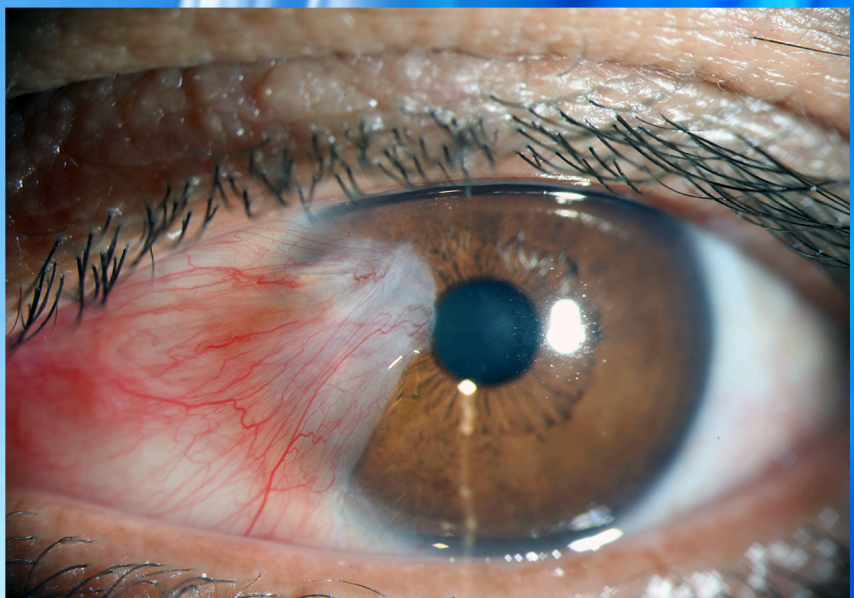


## PTERYGIUM

A pterygium is a benign growth of tissue on the surface of the eye. This growth is often triangular in shape and, if left untreated, can extend across the pupil obscuring vision, or causing the surface of the eye to alter shape and "warp" resulting in vision blurring.

Exposure to excessive amounts of ultra-violet light is thought to be the most significant cause of pterygia, which are more common in people living in sunny areas and in people whose jobs expose them to ultra-violet light (eg: farmers, beach dwellers). The risk of pterygia is higher in ozone layer-depleted regions of the world, such as New Zealand, due to reduced ultra-violet-light filtering.

A pterygium starts as redness and thickening in the corner of the eye – usually the corner closest to the nose. If you notice these symptoms, you should see your local optometrist immediately. Treatment depends on the size and nature of the pterygium, the symptoms and whether vision is affected. A pterygium can be treated with eye drops or surgery may be recommended when vision is affected or symptoms are particularly problematic.

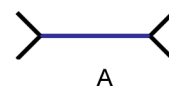


### HOURS

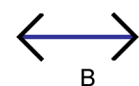
MONDAY, TUESDAY & WEDNESDAY  
9:00AM TO 5:00PM  
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