

Macular Pucker

The macula is the center part of the retina, responsible for fine detail vision such as reading.

Macular pucker is also called epi-retinal membrane (ERM) and is a cellophane-like membrane that forms over the macula. These membranes are fairly common. The pucker, or wrinkling, is not as common.

The problem usually progresses slowly and distorts or blurs the central vision. As the pucker grows worse, the tugging on the macula may cause swelling.

Symptoms

Macular puckers are usually seen in patients over the age of 75. The symptoms include...

- Blurred vision
- Double vision (even with one eye closed)
- Distorted or wavy vision
- Straight lines may appear bent

Causes

The cause of macular pucker is unknown, but the condition is often associated with eye problems such as diabetic retinopathy, posterior vitreous detachment, detachment of the retina and trauma.

Treatment

The treatment for a macular pucker depends on the severity of the condition.

When the pucker has impaired vision to the point it is affecting the patient's lifestyle, we may perform a procedure called a vitrectomy and membrane peel. The peel is performed in an operating room and involves the risks associated with surgery. We most often recommend waiting for treatment until your vision has decreased to the point that the risk of the procedure justifies the improvement you will see in your vision.