

Vitreotomy Surgery

جراحة استئصال الجسم الزجاجي

World leading
**experts in
eye care**



**Moorfields
Eye Hospital Dubai**
A branch of Moorfields London



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What is **Vitreotomy** surgery?

Vitreous is a clear, transparent jelly inside the eyeball in front of the retina. A vitrectomy is microsurgery performed to remove the jelly and replace it by a saline solution, gas or a special type of silicone oil.

Reasons for doing a vitrectomy

The surgery is done when the vitreous itself is opaque (which can happen with bleeding, infection or sometimes just spontaneously) or when the surgeon needs to operate on the retina – in this case the vitreous is removed to allow access to the retina. The most common reasons for operating on the retina are retinal detachment, diabetes and scarring on the retina.

How is it done?

The eye can be made numb using local anaesthesia, and as often as not this is enough to allow surgery to be done. Sometimes though general anaesthesia is needed.

Usually three small holes are made in the white part of the eye just back from the cornea. A whole series of special instruments have been designed to fit through these small holes to cut, suck or laser inside the eye. What is actually done depends of course on what is wrong in the first place.





Figure 1

Tear in the retina with
retinal detachment



Figure 2

Diabetic scarring and
detachment



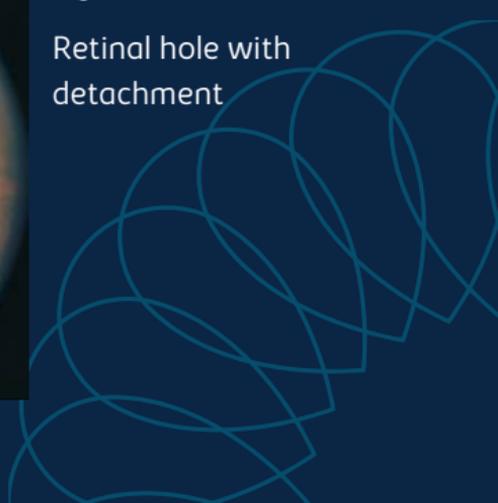
Figure 3

Hole in the retina



Figure 4

Retinal hole with
detachment



What else may be **done at the same time?**

Cataract: very often this type of surgery also involves removing the lens from the eye and putting in an artificial lens implant (cataract surgery). The reason is that often eyes with retinal problems often have cataract as well, and that even if the lens is clear the vitrectomy surgery may result in it going cloudy.

Gas: a gas bubble is often injected to hold the retina in place while the laser or cryotherapy treatment sticks the retina down. It may take from 1 week to 8 weeks to clear depending on the type of gas. While the gas is clearing the vision will be poor and often you will have to posture face down for certain lengths of time depending on your condition. You must not fly until the gas bubble clears as the pressure in the eye will increase if you do.

As the gas clears you will notice a line of gas in your vision. You will slowly start to see in the top of your vision which will eventually get better over the time it takes for the bubble to clear (usually 3-4 weeks).

Silicone oil: this is used in certain cases of retinal detachment or other retinal problems that require longer term support than when gas is used. Patients can fly after surgery where silicone oil is used. The length of time the oil is left in the eye depends on your condition, a second operation is required to remove the oil. In severe retinal detachments it is often left in for years. Other cases the oil may be removed around 6 months to a year later. This may be combined with cataract surgery, and further laser treatment at the same time.



Heavy liquid (perfluorocarbon): this is a special heavier than water liquid used in vitrectomy surgery. It is just used during the operation for particular types of retinal detachment, and removed before the operation is finished.

Buckle: this is a strap of inert silicone that is sewn on to the outside of the eye at the back in order to indent the globe. It is done in certain types of retinal detachment. Occasionally the buckle is placed on the eye without also doing a vitrectomy.

Care of the eye **after surgery**

The eye will often look red and inflamed after surgery, and this improves after a few weeks. You will be asked to use one or more types of eye drop to control the inflammation in the eye and sometimes also the pressure. Usually these drops will be stopped in 4 – 6 weeks.

If gas or silicone oil has been used then you may be asked to position your head in a certain way to put the gas or oil up against the correct part of the retina – this will be explained at the time. Posturing may be needed for a few days to a few weeks.

It is important not to rub the eye, and sensible to wear dark glasses outdoors for a few weeks. There will be follow up visits to the clinic where this care will be discussed.



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Opening hours:

Saturday to Thursday, 8.30am to 5.30pm,
for information and advice on eye conditions and
treatments from experienced ophthalmic trained staff.



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