



CENTRAL SEROUS RETINOPATHY (CSR)

The specialized central zone of the retina—the macula—is extremely delicate, and even minute alterations in shape or function can affect our ability to see details clearly. CSR is a disorder characterized by the buildup of fluid just beneath the center of the macula.

This bubble of fluid or blister causes blurred vision, and occasionally distortion or alteration in the size or shape of objects, a central dark spot, or even a washed out appearance to colors. CSR is typically seen in young males between 20 and 40 years of age often under stress or with "Type A personality". Steroid use is also a risk factor. The condition resolves spontaneously in the majority of patients over weeks to several months, but can occasionally be chronic.

The evaluation of CSR typically involves a complete eye exam, followed by a detailed photographic study of the retina (fluorescein angiography), which is performed in the doctor's office. The photographs allow your doctor to confirm the diagnosis, as well as rule out other causes of fluid buildup within the macula.

In select cases, typically those that are chronic or bilateral, treatment may be recommended. This consists of either using a traditional "hot" laser directed at the source of the fluid leak, or using photodynamic therapy (PDT or "cold" laser) to treat the entire affected area.

Treatment is more often than not successful, but recurrences are not uncommon. Also, in chronic cases, with or without treatment, abnormal blood vessels can occasionally grow that can permanently damage vision.

If steroid use has been identified as the likely cause for the disease, your doctor may recommend avoiding steroids or switching to alternative medications if possible. This usually results in resolution of CSR.