



MACULAR PUCKER

What is a macular pucker?

In order for the macula, the small, central portion of the retina responsible for seeing fine details, to function normally, it needs to be flat and smooth against the wall of the eye like wall paper. If the macula becomes wrinkled, or creased it may swell or bulge and this is known as a macular pucker.

What causes a macular pucker?

Usually a pucker develops when scar tissue grows across the surface of the macula. As the scar tissue warps or contracts, it creates a wrinkle in the underlying retina. A pucker can also develop as the vitreous, a clear gel that fills the center portion of the eye, shrinks or contracts and pulls on the macula, again creating a wrinkle.

Other conditions associated with macular pucker include:

- Vitreous detachment
- Retinal tear or detachment
- Inflammation (Uveitis) or infection inside the eye
- Trauma to the eye (including prior eye surgery)
- Blood vessel disorders inside the eye (i.e. retinal vein occlusion)

What are the symptoms of a macular pucker?

Symptoms can range from mild to severe, but will only occur in the affected eye. Occasionally, both eyes can develop a pucker, either simultaneously or even years apart. Typically, puckers cause blurred or distorted central vision

How is a macular pucker treated?

It depends on the severity. Mild puckers are sometimes observed and can remain stable or even improve over many months or years. More advanced or severe puckers generally require surgery to stabilize or improve the vision. The procedure, called a vitrectomy, involves inserting tiny instruments into the anesthetized eye to remove the vitreous gel, allowing access to the macula. Delicate forceps are then used to peel away the epiretinal membrane, which allows the macula to return to its normal shape. Your doctor will be able to tell you how severe your condition is and whether or not surgery is indicated.