

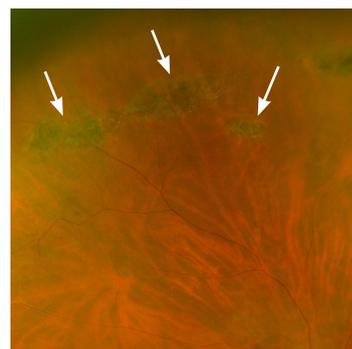
Lattice Degeneration

Lattice degeneration is a common condition affecting the periphery of the retina, with oval or linear patches of retinal thinning. While mild cases of lattice pose little threat to the vision, more severe cases may develop holes that increase the risk of a retinal detachment. Retinal tears are also sometimes associated with lattice. In cases of vision-threatening lattice degeneration, laser treatment may be recommended to lower the risk of retinal detachment.

Who gets lattice degeneration?

Lattice degeneration affects about 10% of the population and affects both eyes in about one third to one half of cases. While lattice is more common in near-sighted eyes and may run in families, lattice is quite common even without those risk factors.

Lattice usually develops during the teenage years but is often only identified later in life on a comprehensive eye examination after being present for years without any symptoms. Lattice often progresses with age, and regular examination can help identify progression that threatens the vision.



How does lattice threaten my vision?

The retina is unusually thin in lattice lesions and the vitreous gel (the gel that naturally fills the eye) tends to have a strong adhesion around the edges of lattice lesions. As the retina becomes thinner in the lattice lesions and the gel undergoes age-related liquefaction and separation from the retinal surface, lattice beds can develop full thickness defects and liquid from the middle of the eye can start to seep through those defects into the space under the retina. A retinal detachment is the spread of fluid under the retina, separating the retina from the wall of the eye.

What would I notice in my vision if I have lattice?

Most cases of lattice degeneration have no symptoms, and this is true even for severe cases of lattice that pose a high risk of retinal detachment. When symptoms occur, they may include floaters (black spots or cobwebs moving around in the vision) or flashing lights (colorless, split second flashes like a lightning bolt). Symptoms do not necessarily indicate the severity of the lattice, but symptoms of flashing may indicate that the vitreous gel is in the process of pulling away from the retina. If you experience new floaters or flashes, or a curtain or shadow in your vision, please call for urgent retinal evaluation.



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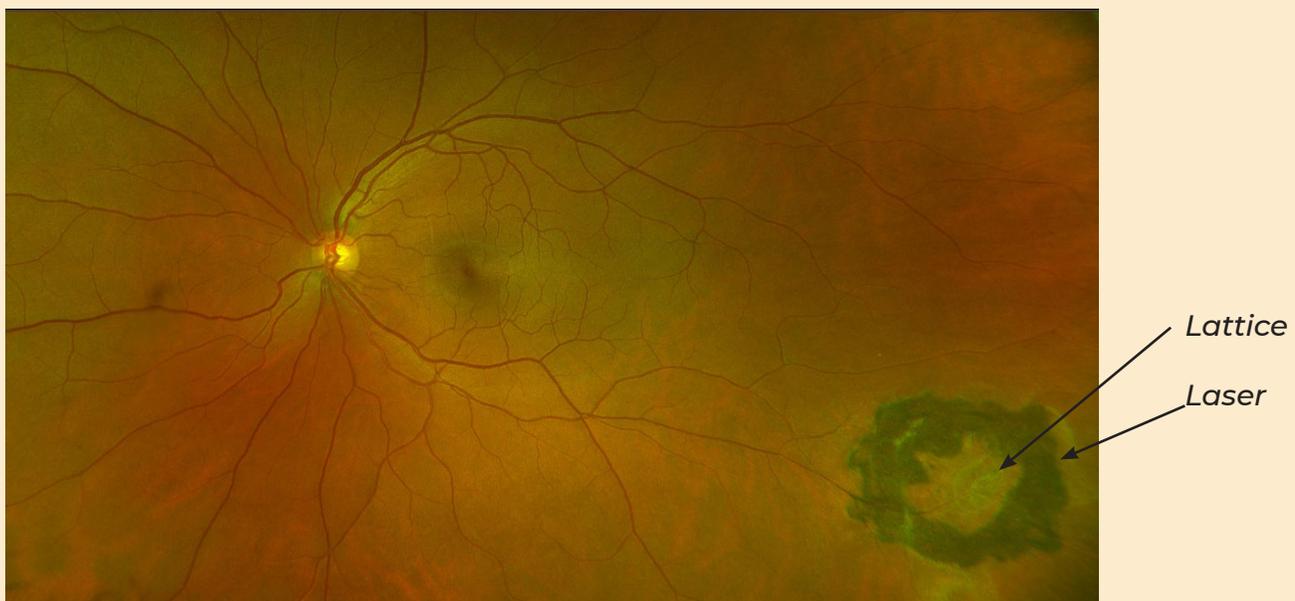
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Lattice Degeneration

▶ How is lattice degeneration treated?

In cases of vision-threatening lattice degeneration, the most common treatment is prophylactic laser retinopexy. Your BARA doctor will carefully apply laser spots in a ring around each lattice lesion. The laser spots act like glue, creating an adhesion between the retina and the wall of the eye, thereby lowering the risk of a retinal detachment.

Laser for lattice can be performed in the office, and your BARA doctor will discuss what to expect with laser treatment if treatment is indicated.



Laser retinopexy creates rows of laser spots around each lattice lesion of concern. The laser spots create a “welding line” which greatly reduces the risk of a retinal detachment.



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Bay Area Retina Associates is a group practice of retinal surgeons. All members of the group are board certified by the American Board of Ophthalmology and have completed fellowship training in the medical and surgical care of retinal diseases. All BARA surgeons have expertise in the treatment of common diseases such as AMD, diabetic retinopathy and retinal detachment, as well as rare diseases. BARA physicians see patients in eight offices around the East Bay, a community we have served for almost 40 years.