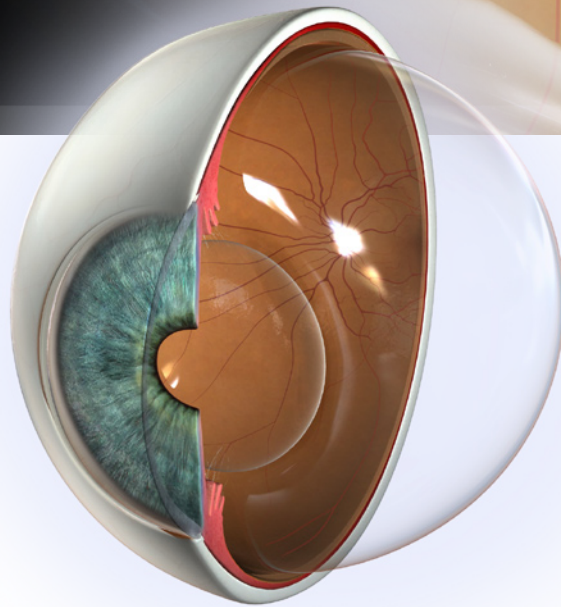


Vitrectomy

A “vitrectomy” is a surgical procedure in which most of the jelly-like material that normally occupies the back two thirds of the eye is removed.

The vitreous is a clear jelly-like substance that fills the center of the eye. It is composed mainly of water and comprises about 2/3 of the eye’s volume. The vitreous helps the eye maintain a round shape and is attached to the retina at various points including the macula and the optic nerve.



Treatment

Vitrectomy may be recommended when there has been a leakage of blood inside the eye that is not resolving on its own, when the vitreous is tugging a hole in a part of the central retina called the macula, in certain types of retinal detachment, or when there is advanced damage to the retina from diabetes. The vitreous is removed with a miniature handheld cutting device and replaced with either a clear watery fluid, an expanding gas, or silicone oil, depending on the situation. When an expanding gas is used, patients may be asked to remain in a face-down position for about two days after surgery, to keep the gas bubble properly positioned over the retina.



Vitrectomy is usually performed as an outpatient procedure, which means there is no overnight stay.