

# **RETINA CONSULTANTS OF WESTERN NEW YORK**

## **INFORMATION SHEET ON RETINAL DETACHMENT**

### **You have been diagnosed with retinal detachment.**

- It can be caused by a combination of aging, trauma, diabetes, chance, nearsightedness (myopia), genetics (family history) and accumulation of impact from any previous trauma

### **Overall, the available options include (may not be applicable to you):**

- Surgery
- In-office procedure where gas bubble is injected (retinal pneumopexy)
- Second opinion
- Observation

### **Main points of any surgery/procedure is involves the following:**

- Closing/blocking the retinal tear through which the fluid went underneath the retina to cause it to detach
- Draining fluid that has gone underneath the retina either through surgery or allowing the body to absorb it
- Positioning of the head to place either gas or oil against the area of the retinal tear/detachment.
  - This helps to keep more fluid from going through the retinal tear.
  - 45 minutes for every hour for 3-4 weeks or more
- Medications including eye drops and/or pills
- Observing for any scar tissue, swelling or bleeding which can cause the retina to re-detach and cause decreased vision even after the retina is attached
- **You may not be able to go back to your previous work. Please plan accordingly.**
- **The retina may keep on detaching even after surgery. This may lead to multiple surgeries and decrease in vision.**
- **Please seek a second opinion if you are uncertain of any part of your condition and treatment.**

### **Main benefit of the surgery/procedure to reattach the retina:**

- Slow further damage

- Give the body a chance to reconnect some of the damaged retinal nerve endings
- Without intervention, the retinal detachment will progress. This will cause the vision to worsen and **MAY** cause pain, deformity and loss of eye.

### **The risks include, but are not limited to:**

- Infection
- Bleeding
- Pain
- Hemorrhage
- Increased eye pressure
- Glaucoma
- Cataract
- Cosmetic changes, chronic pain and discomfort
- Reduced ability to perform personal and professional activities of daily life
- Continued recurrence of retinal detachment requiring multiple surgeries and procedures
- Multiple surgeries for other reasons
- Decreased vision, loss of vision or loss of eye

### **Special circumstances and notes**

- Initially, a gas bubble procedure may be performed in the office to stabilize/resolve the detachment. If the RD does not resolve, then surgery(ies) may be needed.
- In some patients, the retina may keep re-detaching, requiring more surgeries. As this can not be foreseen, a second opinion is recommended..
- The course of treatment will require positioning of the head for 45 minutes out of each hour for 2-4 weeks or more after each procedure. In case of recurrent retinal detachment or more surgeries, this will require even longer periods of positioning.
- This may cause significant personal, professional and economic hardship among others. You may be out of work for a prolonged period of time. Please plan accordingly.
- Please consult with your family and doctors to see if you are able to undergo this procedure both medically and having support at home - especially since you are living alone.
- Even if the vision is good to start with, the vision may worsen after surgery/procedure. This may happen even with successful reattachment of the retina. This may be due to formation of scar tissue, lack of blood flow, infection, hemorrhage among others.
- If the macula (center of the retina that sees detailed and center vision) is involved, then the prognosis for vision improvement is worse.

- Nearsighted patients may experience increased risks due to the stretching of the retina. For instance, this can lead to hemorrhage, recurrent detachment and scar tissues which can reduce the vision and require more surgeries
- Placing a scleral buckle (a belt around the eye to place the eye wall and the retina closer) may increase the level of nearsightedness and hemorrhage/extrusion/intrusion of the buckle into or out of the eye
- Trauma related RD may behave differently than age-related RD. Increased risk of scar is present which can cause multiple retinal detachment requiring multiple surgeries. In such cases, the vision may worsen significantly.

**The purpose of any surgery/procedure is to help in reattaching the retina. If there are no complications, then the vision may stabilize or improve. However, in some patients, complications can occur due to the nature of the eye shape, postoperative care, genetics or procedures. In such cases, the vision may worsen permanently.**

**If you have any doubts or questions or if you don't feel that the condition has not been explained enough then please seek a second opinion before proceeding**

**Please consider all options before proceeding.**