



Eye Facts Flashers and Floaters

The sudden onset of flashing lights (photopsia) or new floaters in an eye is a common occurrence, especially as people enter their 50s and 60s. These symptoms can also occur at an earlier age—often in the setting of trauma or in near-sighted people. It is very important to report these symptoms immediately to your primary eye doctor, or to contact a retinal specialist directly. Frequently, there is no major problem, but these symptoms can be associated with a serious retinal problem such as a retinal tear or a retinal detachment. Retinal tears and retinal detachments, when caught early, have a very good prognosis, so these symptoms should initiate an urgent call, followed by a timely eye exam.

Other concerning symptoms, in addition to photopsia and a sudden onset of many new floaters, are changes in side (peripheral) vision or in central vision. A person who develops any of these four symptoms should contact an eye doctor urgently.

Please contact your personal eye doctor or the University of Rochester Flaum Eye Institute to ask any questions, or schedule an eye exam.

To schedule an appointment call 585 275-0626 (m-f 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.)
or 585 273-3937 (after hours & emergencies)

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