



WHAT IS A CHOROIDAL NEVUS?

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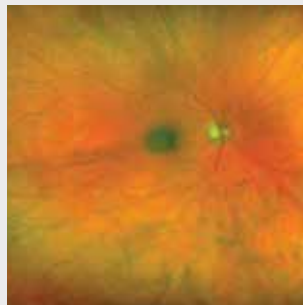
A choroidal nevus is a collection of pigmented or nonpigmented cells in the choroid, the vascular layer of the eye. Nevus is essentially a medical word for freckle or mole. Nevi refers to multiple lesions. These are very common, especially in Caucasian patients, maybe as common as 1 in every 10 people.

What is the treatment for a choroidal nevus?

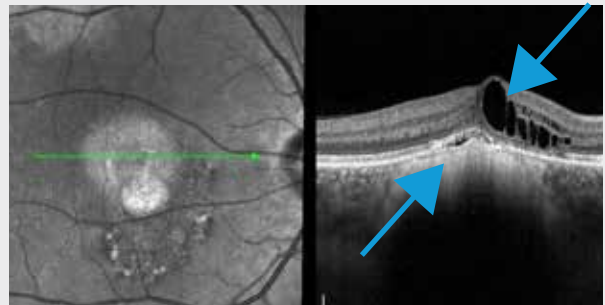
Generally, choroidal nevi are just observed to assess for growth or change to determine if they are acting biologically more like a choroidal melanoma, a cancer. Dr. Scheffler will examine your eye periodically in the office with detailed imaging studies such as ultrasound, photographs, optical coherence tomography, and fluorescein angiography to check whether the nevus is growing or changing.



Amelanotic nevus



Nevus in the macula, the center part of the retina



Fluid within the retina produced as a result of inflammation from the nevus

Why do I have a choroidal nevus?

An initial mutation (misprint) in the DNA likely led to a nevus in early childhood. Benign nevi typically grow very slowly. However, rarely they can transform into cancers if another mutation occurs.

Are nevi/melanoma inherited?

In less than 5% of patients, nevi/melanoma can be associated with a genetic abnormality, which can be detected by bloodwork. Patients with this genetic abnormality are more likely to have a freckle/nevus that becomes a true cancer and are also at risk of developing other non-ocular cancers.

Do I have cancer?

A nevus is a pre-cancerous condition, similar to a freckle on your skin. Just as a majority of freckles on the skin don't grow into cancer, it is also rare for a nevus to grow into cancer.

Do I need a biopsy?

Biopsies are rarely performed for small nevi in ocular oncology. In the future, we hope to develop a noninvasive test in clinic to help determine which nevi will transform into cancer.

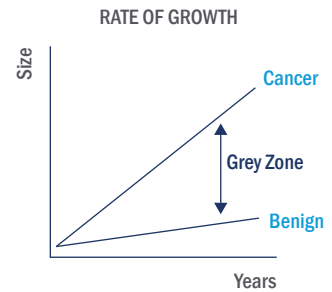
What happens if my nevus grows?

Nevi rarely grow quickly and transform into melanoma, a true cancer of the eye. We treat these cancers with surgery and/or radiation.

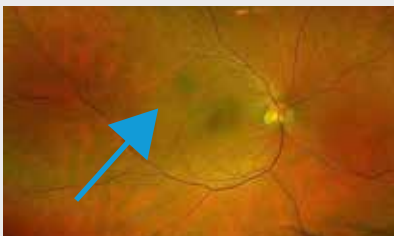
How often do choroidal nevi grow into melanoma?

Only a small percentage of nevi grow into melanoma. Over the years, we have learned to identify features that suggest which nevi will turn into melanoma. The following features are not perfect but are a helpful guideline. Depending on how many of these features your nevus has, Dr. Scheffler will decide how frequently you need to be seen.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rate of growth*** • Thickness > 1.5mm** • Base Dimension > 10mm** • Certain features on ultrasound** • Ciliary body involvement** 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patient age > 60** • Fluid under retina** • Orange pigment* • Lack of chronic features* • Visual symptoms*
***most reliable	**more reliable
	*less reliable



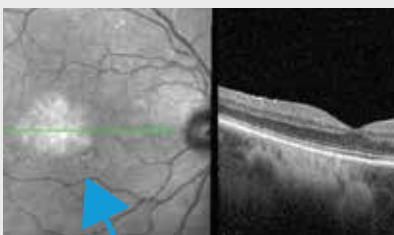
Low Risk Nevus



Small Base



Small Base

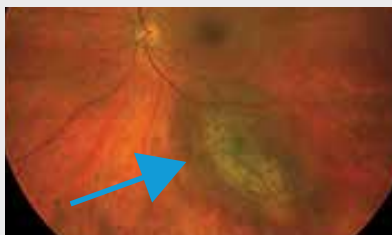


Flat

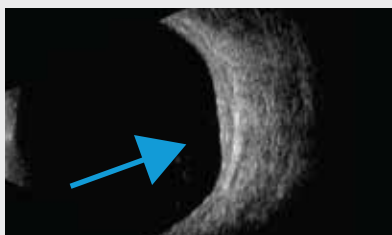
Moderate Risk Nevus



Large Base 1
Drusen (sign of chronicity) 2

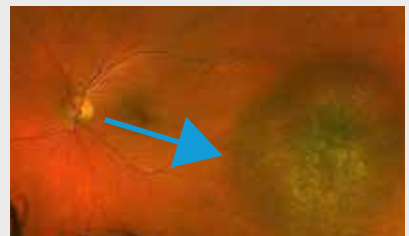


Large Base

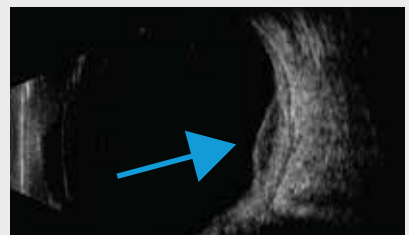


High Internal Reflectivity (solid)

High Risk Nevus



Large Base



Low Internal Reflectivity (hollow)



Elevation