

LATTICE DEGENERATION

What is lattice degeneration?

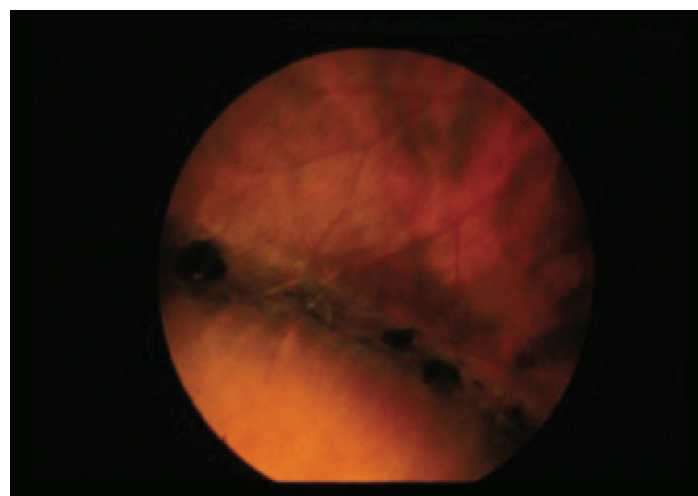
Lattice degeneration is thinning of the outer edges of the peripheral retina. It looks like white, interlocking lattice work found on the side of a house or building. It can occur in one or both eyes in children or adults. The cause is unknown. Alone, lattice degeneration does not cause blurry vision.

How common is lattice?

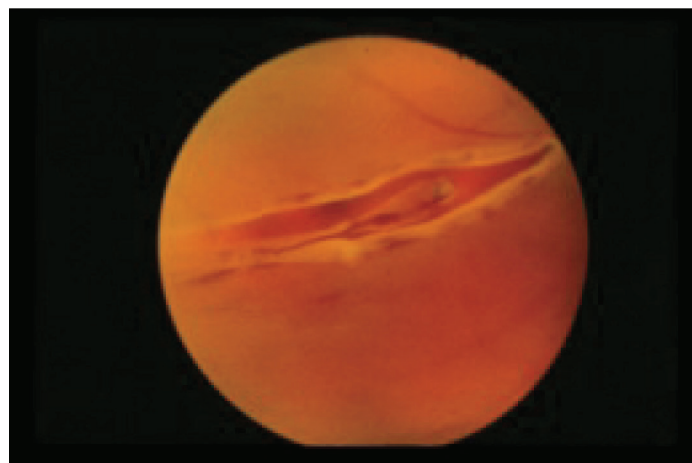
Lattice affects roughly 7% of the population. It can be more common in certain inherited diseases that affect the retina. About 40% of all retinal detachments are associated with lattice degeneration, but not all patients with lattice degeneration develop retinal detachments.

Why worry about lattice?

Lattice degeneration is like a preperforated area to your retina. When the jelly that makes up the core of your eye, the vitreous, pulls on this area, it is more likely to tear or break. These tears can lead to a retinal detachment.



Lattice Degeneration



Retinal Tear

What symptoms should I worry about?

Alone, lattice degeneration will cause no changes in your vision, but it increases the risk of a retinal tear or detachment. Flashes, floaters, or any type of curtain or shade in your vision can signal that the jelly in the eye has pulled too strongly on the retina, and perhaps a tear has occurred. Always see an eye care professional immediately for a dilated eye exam if these symptoms occur.

What can be done? Will I need treatment?

Sometimes, lattice that is lower risk can be closely observed with regular dilated eye exams. Lattice patches that are associated with increased risk factors such as near-sightedness, a history of a previous tear or detachment, blood in the eye, location and extent, or a systemic disease are more likely to be given preventative laser. This laser treatment, performed in the clinic, involves making an adhesion in the retina to “tack down” the lattice to help prevent its tearing or conversion into a retinal tear or detachment. Sometimes, this laser is performed in the operating room as well. The laser can help lower the risk for a tear or detachment.

Will it go away? Will I always need treatment for this?

Lattice can increase in the affected eye and can change, but it typically does not disappear. Frequent monitoring by the patient for new onset of flashes, floaters, a curtain or shade along with a dilated eye exam are the best ways to minimize the risk of lattice turning into a more serious condition.

