

What is a Retinal Vein Occlusion (RVO)?

Retinal vein occlusion occurs when the circulation of a retinal vein becomes obstructed by an adjacent blood vessel, causing hemorrhages in the retina. Swelling and ischemia (lack of oxygen) of the retina as well as glaucoma are fairly common complications.

Patients who experience a branch retinal vein occlusion (BRVO) often notice a gradual improvement in their vision as the hemorrhage resolves. Recovery from a central retinal vein occlusion (CRVO) is much less likely since it affects the retina more extensively.

Who is at risk for a retinal vein occlusion?

Those with heart disease, hypertension, diabetes, and glaucoma are more at risk for retinal vein occlusions. Smoking can also increase one's risk for retinal vascular problems.

Signs and Symptoms of RVO

Visual symptoms can vary in severity from one person to the next and are dependent on where the occlusion occurs.

- Severe loss or distortion of central vision (if central vein occlusion or CRVO)
- Sudden blurred or missing area of vision (if branch vein occlusion or BRVO)

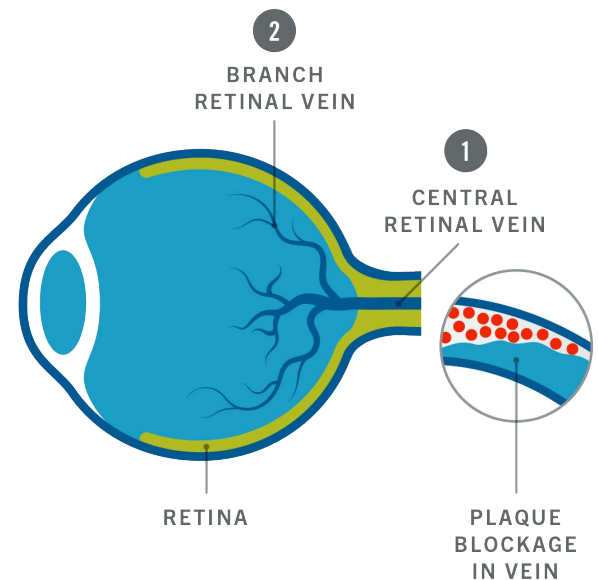


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Treatment Options for RVO

Following a vein occlusion, the primary concern is to treat the secondary complications. Cystoid macular edema or swelling is one common complication that is most often treated with intravitreal injections as needed to control edema. If areas of the retina are oxygen-deprived, LASER may be used to prevent or manage growth of new, delicate vessels that can break and bleed or cause glaucoma.