

# CENTRAL RETINAL ARTERY OCCLUSION

## A Central Retinal Artery Occlusion is a Blockage of the Main Artery Supplying the Retina

### Central Retinal Artery Occlusion (CRAO) is Considered a “Stroke” of the Eye

The retina is a layer of cells at the back of the eye that allow us to see light and color. The blockage usually comes from a clot or fatty deposit in the blood vessel. If the blood clot breaks free and moves to the brain, it can cause a stroke.

This guide is intended to help educate patients on CRAO risk factors, symptoms and treatment options.

#### 01 | Risk Factors

The most common risk factors associated with CRAO include:

- Diabetes
- Elevated blood pressure (hypertension)
- An abnormal heart rhythm
- Certain types of arthritis
- Certain heart valve problems
- Hardening of the arteries
- Blood clot
- Advanced age

#### 02 | Symptoms

Central retinal artery occlusion causes sudden, painless, severe vision loss or visual field effect. There are no symptoms before it happens.

If only a branch of the artery is blocked, there may be partial loss of vision coming from the area of the retina not receiving blood.

#### 03 | Treatment

No treatment method has been shown to conclusively benefit CRAO. If you are seen within 24 hours after acute vision loss begins, the ophthalmologist can attempt to dislodge the embolus through methods such as:

- Using glaucoma medications to decrease internal eye pressure
- Inhaling 5% carbon dioxide and then using ocular massage
- Performing a minor surgical procedure known as anterior chamber paracentesis, in which numbing drops are used and a small amount of fluid is withdrawn from the front of the eye

If you suffer from diabetes, are overweight, have hypertension or are between the ages of 50 and 70, you should be aware of the signs of CRAO.

Your Ophthalmologist may diagnose CRAO after an examination of the eye, including a dilated pupil exam.

For more information on CRAO, please visit:

<https://www.aao.org/>

***Did You Know?***  
*Two-thirds of patients have hypertension*

#### References

<http://www.allaboutvision.com/conditions/eye-occlusions.htm>