Getting to NUH Medical Centre

By MRT

1. Alight at the Kent Ridge MRT station (Circle Line).
   Look for Exit C.

2. You are now at Level 1 of the NUH Medical Centre.
   Use lifts at Lift Lobby B to get to the clinic levels.

By Taxi or Car

1. The NUH Medical Centre is accessible via Lower Kent Ridge Road.

2. Alight at the NUH Medical Centre entrance.
   Parking is available at Levels 5, 6, 7 and 7A.

3. Take lifts from Lift Lobby B/C/D to the clinic levels.

Contact Us

17c - Eye Surgery Centre
NUH Medical Centre, Level 17
Tel/Appointment: 6772 2002/ 6772 2414
Fax: 6734 3985
Email: eye_surgery@nuhs.edu.sg
Website: www.nuh.com.sg/eye
Opening Hours: 8.30am - 6.00pm (Mondays - Fridays)
             8.30am - 12.30pm (Saturdays)

Caring for your EYES

Floaters & Flashes
17c - Eye Surgery Centre

National University Hospital
5 Lower Kent Ridge Road
Singapore 119074
Tel: (65) 6779 5555 Fax: (65) 6779 5678
Website: www.nuh.com.sg
Business Registration No. 198500843R

Information provided is not exhaustive and is correct at time of printing (May 15) and subject to revision without notice.
What are floaters?

Floaters are shapes which drift across your vision. The exact form of these is very variable – they have been described as small dots or flies, cobwebs or strands of hair.

What causes floaters?

The middle of the eye is filled with a clear, jelly-like substance, the vitreous. As the eye ages strands of a protein called collagen form within the vitreous. These strands swirl gently as the eye moves, casting shadows on the retina and giving the perception of floaters. This is a normal ageing change and is generally benign.

Occasionally, in people aged 40 years and above, the vitreous can separate from retina. As the vitreous separates, it pulls on the retina, causing the eye to see flashes of bright light. A sudden increase (shower) of floaters is usually seen at the same time. In these cases, floaters and flashes of light are an indicator of a serious problem of retinal tears or posterior vitreous detachment, which have a high risk of sight loss.

Floaters can also be the effect of blood or inflammatory debris in the vitreous rather than age-related degeneration.

Who is likely to be affected by floaters and flashes?

Changes in the vitreous are part of the natural ageing process of the eye. Benign floaters are quite common in people over the age of 40 whose eyes are otherwise normal.

The vitreous in short-sighted people tends to undergo degeneration earlier. Therefore, myopic people often experience floaters at a younger age.

People with diseases of the retina such as diabetic retinopathy, inflammation of the eye and eye injuries may see floaters unrelated to age-related vitreous degeneration. This can also happen after certain eye laser treatments or surgeries.

Are floaters and flashes serious?

Generally, individuals who notice one or two floaters need not be concerned, particularly if they have been present for many months or years.

However, in about 10% of cases, floaters are a symptom of vitreous degeneration that may affect the retina with tears or retinal detachments. This can threaten sight if left untreated. Therefore, it is recommended that you undergo a full eye examination if you experience floaters and/or flashes of light for the first time. This is even more important if you suffer from short-sightedness, as the risk of retinal tears and detachments is higher.

Can floaters be removed?

Treatment of floaters by lasers or surgery is technically possible but carries significant risks to sight because of possible complications such as retinal detachment and cataract. Therefore, unless the floaters are accompanied by any sight-threatening conditions, active treatments like this are not recommended.

The information provided is not exhaustive. Further discussion with your physician is strongly recommended.