

Choroidal Nevus

A choroidal nevus is a benign, pigmented spot-like lesion seen in the retina of a person's eye(s). The retina is the tissue lining the inside of the back of each eye. The retina processes light and sends an electrical signal to the brain thus allowing a person to see. (The retina of a person's eye is analogous to photographic film in a camera.) A choroidal nevus is typically asymptomatic. This lesion is usually detected by an eye doctor when the retina is examined through dilated pupils at the time of a comprehensive eye exam. A choroidal nevus is grey-brown in color and should be flat. Yellow-orange pigment or "drusen" may appear on the surface of a choroidal nevus. A choroidal nevus is analogous to a "freckle" or mole on a person's skin. A choroidal nevus can vary in size and can be found in any section of the retina. Choroidal nevi are commonly seen in the population. More than one nevus can be found in an eye. Also, one or both eyes can have a choroidal nevus.

Whenever a choroidal nevus is detected, close inspection is needed in order to ensure that the lesion does not represent a rare, intraocular malignancy known as a choroidal melanoma. If any elevation is seen then a choroidal melanoma must be ruled out. Further evaluation by a retina specialist may be necessary at this point.

The recommended management of a choroidal nevus is regular periodic reassessment for signs of growth. This typically is done on a yearly basis. If possible, photographic documentation should also be performed. If there is suspicion that the lesion may represent a choroidal melanoma then B-scan ultrasonography needs to be performed promptly. A new testing modality known as Optical Coherence Tomography (OCT) may also be used to study the lesion.

Should there be any questions, one of our technicians or doctors will be happy to answer them.