

Retinoschisis

Retinoschisis is a genetic eye disease that splits the retina, the light-sensitive layer of cells lining the back of the eye. It occurs in two forms, one affecting young children, the other affecting older adults. Both forms usually affect both eyes, though one eye may be worse than the other.

Because the disease is inherited on the X chromosome, childhood retinoschisis occurs in boys more than girls. It is usually detected because of poor vision.

If the split retina involves the peripheral or side retina, peripheral vision is lost. One is also at risk for a retinal detachment. But more commonly, retinoschisis affects the macula, the area of the retina responsible for central vision. In this location, one loses central vision.

Peripheral retinoschisis, more common in adults, is usually caused by aging and does not affect vision, but it can cause a retinal detachment. If detected early, a retinal detachment can be treated with surgery or laser therapy.