

Uveitis

The uvea refers to the center section of the eye made up of the iris, ciliary body and the choroid. The “itis” refers to an inflammation or swelling of any part of the uvea. It can be caused by a wide variety of agents and disease states, but most commonly is caused by allergens, virus, bacteria, chemicals coming in contact with the eye or direct trauma to the eye.

Symptoms

- red and/or bloodshot eyes
- burning sensation
- itchy eyes
- discharge and/or tearing
- blurry vision
- light sensitivity
- pain
- dark spots floating in the field of vision, which may ultimately result in vision loss.



Treatment

The type of treatment prescribed will be dependent upon the type of uveitis you have. The following lists the types of uveitis and their treatment:

Iris or Anterior Uveitis - often a result of an underlying autoimmune disorder such as rheumatoid arthritis or ankylosing spondylitis. It is best treated with warm compresses placed on the affected eye(s) several times a day for at least 10 minutes. Your doctor may prescribe pain relievers that can be taken by mouth and/or eye drops that are placed directly in the eye. Eye drops can serve as pain relievers, dilators to minimize motion, and anti-inflammatories to reduce swelling. Wear protective eyewear such as sunglasses and hats to help with light sensitivity. Treatment usually takes effect in a few days to a week. The condition may continue to return as long as the underlying disorder is present.

Posterior Uveitis - a less common form of uveitis. It affects the choroidal or retinal layers of the eye. It usually occurs after a viral or bacterial infection has occurred such as with tuberculosis or cytomegalovirus (CMV) infection. It is commonly seen in infants that were infected prenatally with the parasite *Toxoplasma gondii* (Toxoplasmosis). Treatment involves addressing the underlying infection along with relieving the symptoms that the patient is

experiencing. Inflammation from posterior uveitis may continue for months and even years. Severe cases can cause permanent vision loss.