



Oxford University Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Mole at the back of the eye

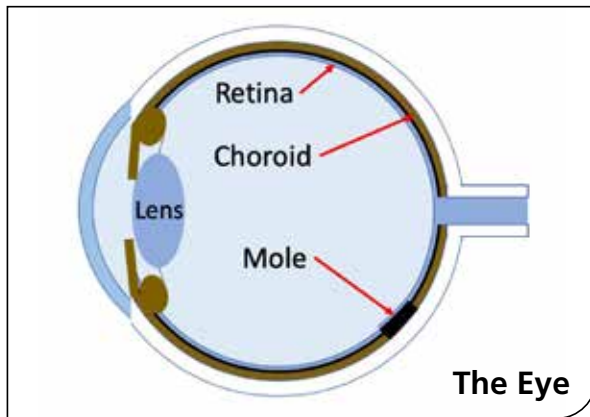
Information for patients



What is a mole?

A mole is a swelling formed by cells that produce melanin pigment (the pigment that gives human skin, hair, and eyes their colour). The medical term for a mole is 'melanocytic naevus'.

Moles at the back of the eye develop under the retina, in a tissue known as the choroid. You may have had a photograph taken by your optometrist (optician) when you had an eye test, which suggests you may have a mole at the back of your eye. In colour photographs a mole usually appears as a grey spot under the retina.



How common are moles at the back of the eye?

Moles at the back of the eye are common. They occur in about 6% of adults (6 in every 100).

Are moles dangerous?

Moles are harmless and almost never interfere with vision. Extremely rarely, moles can develop into a melanoma (which is cancerous). Ocular (eye) melanomas are uncommon, affecting around 6 adults per million each year. They are even rarer in people with a dark complexion. Melanomas need treatment to preserve health and vision.

Why have I been referred to the MOLES Clinic?

Specialist eye doctors (ophthalmologists) and specialist optometrists at the Ocular Moles Photography Clinic (MOLES Clinic) are able to tell the difference between moles and melanomas by examining photographs and scans of the eye.

What will happen at the MOLES Clinic?

After testing your vision, we will put drops in your eyes to temporarily dilate your pupils (make your pupils larger). These will blur your vision for about 3 hours, so it is important not to drive yourself home after your appointment.

After the eye drops have taken effect we will take detailed photographs and scans of your eyes. When you have had these tests you will be able to leave the clinic. **You will not see a doctor at this visit.**

Our specialist ophthalmologists will review your eye photographs and scans after your appointment. We will send a report and plan of care to your GP and to you within 2 weeks.

If we are not worried about your mole we will let you know the results of your eye tests by letter and return you to the care of your optometrist (optician). We will send you a colour photograph of your mole for you to take to your optometrist next time you are due to go. You will need to arrange to see your optometrist every 1 to 2 years, to get your mole checked.

If your mole looks suspicious, we will send you an appointment by letter to repeat the photographs and scans at our Ocular Moles Photography Clinic after 4-12 months, according to our level of suspicion.

We will explain risks and benefits of any procedure we recommend. We will be happy to answer any questions you have and will do our best to help you understand and remember the information discussed.

What should I do if I am worried about the mole?

If you have been discharged from our care, please visit your usual optometrist or GP if you have any concerns.

If you are still under our care, please write to us at the following address:

**Ocular Moles Photography Clinic, Oxford Eye Hospital,
John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford, OX3 9DU.**

Alternatively you can email: **ouh-tr.ocularmoles.oxon@nhs.net**

Further information

NHS website: **www.ouh.nhs.uk/information**

Oxford Eye Hospital: **www.ouh.nhs.uk/eye-hospital**

Ocumel UK: **www.ocumeluk.org**

If you need an interpreter or would like this information leaflet in another format, such as Easy Read, large print, Braille, audio, electronically or another language, please speak to the department where you are being seen. You will find their contact details on your appointment letter.

Making a difference across our hospitals

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OXFORD HOSPITALS CHARITY (REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 1175809)



Authors: Clinical Ophthalmology Team
April 2020
Review: April 2023
Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
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