Lattice Degeneration of the Retina

What Is Lattice Degeneration of the retina?

Lattice degeneration of the retina is a common condition in which areas of thinning occur in the peripheral retina. Approximately one in every ten people has this condition. The presence of lattice degeneration alone does not interfere with vision. However, in some patients with lattice degeneration, retinal holes or tears can form. This can increase the likelihood of retinal detachment.

What are the symptoms of Lattice Degeneration?

Lattice degeneration is not symptomatic in general. As a person ages, symptoms of seeing flashes or new floaters might indicate that a retinal hole or tear has developed at the site of lattice in the retinal periphery. These symptoms should not be ignored, since a retinal tear could lead to a retinal detachment. Symptoms of a retinal detachment include a loss of side or central vision. A retinal detachment, if left untreated, can cause permanent loss of vision.

How are retinal holes or tears treated?

Retinal holes or tears can be treated with either a laser or a freezing technique called cryotherapy. These treatments form a firm bond between the retina and the surface beneath it. This helps to prevent retinal detachment.

Do all cases of lattice degeneration require treatment?

In most cases of lattice degeneration that are not associated with acute tears or a retinal detachment, observation is all that is needed. Your physician will discuss the appropriate management of your individual case with you.