**Cystoid Macular Edema**

Cystoid macular edema (CME) refers to swelling of the central part of the retina (the macula). The retina is like the film in a camera, and the macula is responsible for detailed central vision. When the macula experiences swelling (edema), central vision is reduced.

### What causes cystoid macular edema?

CME can occur for a variety reasons. Cystoid macular edema can accompany inflammation in the eye after ocular surgery (such as cataract surgery) or it can occur after blockage of a retinal vein (branch retinal vein occlusion or central retinal vein occlusion). Primary inflammatory disorders of the eye (uveitis) can cause CME. Wet age-related macular degeneration can cause CME, although other findings such as bleeding and fluid under the retina are usually seen as well. Macular edema can occur in diabetic patients due to leaky blood vessels, in which case the term “diabetic macular edema” is used. CME can occur from mechanical traction on the macula, as in the case of an epiretinal membrane. Less common causes of CME include retinitis pigmentosa, cancer in the eye, and radiation. CME is rarely seen as a side effects of medications such as niacin (used to treat high cholesterol).

### How is cystoid macular edema diagnosed?

Like many conditions, cystoid macular edema can range from mild to severe. In most cases, CME is visible during detailed examination of the macula by an eye specialist. Additional testing is often indicated to determine the cause and severity of CME. Common tests include optical coherence tomography (OCT) and fluorescein angiography (FA). OCT is a non-invasive scan of the retina which measures the degree of swelling and shows your doctor a cross section of the swollen area.
How is cystoid macular edema treated?

Fluorescein angiography involves a small intravenous injection of dye (fluorescein) followed by a series of photographs of the retina. The images show blood flow and any leakage from blood vessels in the retina, and the patterns seen in these images are often necessary to diagnose the cause of cystoid macular edema.