



# Seeing A “Curtain” Coming Down Over The Eye

---

Dr. Steven D’Orio | Optometrist

OUR VISION IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT SENSES, ALLOWING US TO PERCEIVE THE WORLD AROUND US.

HOWEVER, WHEN VISUAL DISTURBANCES OCCUR, THEY CAN BE ALARMING. ONE COMMON SYMPTOM IS SEEING A “CURTAIN” OR SHADOW DESCENDING ACROSS THE FIELD OF VISION, WHICH CAN BE AN INDICATOR OF A SERIOUS EYE CONDITION.





*Retinal Detachment is a serious eye condition in which the retina, the thin layer of tissue at the back of the eye that senses light and sends visual signals to the brain, becomes separated from its underlying supportive tissue.*



## **WHAT DOES IT FEEL LIKE?**

Seeing a “curtain” coming down over the eye often feels as though a dark shadow or partial blackout is gradually covering part of your vision. This usually starts from one side of the visual field and moves across it.

### **Why is this Happening?**

This phenomenon is often associated with retinal issues, particularly retinal detachment or tears. The retina is the thin layer of tissue at the back of the eye that senses light and sends visual signals to the brain. If the retina starts to detach or tear, it can create the sensation of a shadow or curtain.

People with high myopia are at greater risk of retinal detachment due to a stretched eye shape, which weakens the retina. This can make it more prone to tears and detachment. Regular eye exams are important for early detection.

## COMMON CAUSES OF THE "CURTAIN" EFFECT

- **Retinal Detachment:** A serious condition where the retina pulls away from the underlying tissue, leading to partial or complete vision loss.
- **Retinal Tears:** Small breaks or tears in the retina can allow fluid to accumulate behind it, causing vision disturbances like the curtain effect.
- **Vitreous Detachment:** As we age, the jelly-like substance (vitreous) inside the eye can shrink and pull away from the retina, sometimes causing flashes or shadows.
- **Ocular Migraines:** Some people experience visual disturbances that may resemble a curtain, especially during a migraine episode.



Whether it's retinal detachment, retinal tears, or other issues like vitreous detachment or macular holes, these conditions can lead to significant vision loss if not addressed promptly. If you experience any symptoms of a curtain-like shadow or sudden vision loss, it's important to seek immediate medical attention. Early diagnosis and treatment can help prevent permanent damage and preserve your vision.



## SYMPTOMS TO WATCH FOR

If you experience any of the following symptoms, it's crucial to seek medical attention right away, as they may indicate a serious underlying issue, such as retinal detachment or other eye conditions that could lead to permanent vision loss if not treated promptly.

- **Sudden Loss of Vision or Blurring in One Part of the Visual Field:** This can happen suddenly and often in one eye. The affected area may appear blank, fuzzy, or out of focus. This type of vision loss may be localized, such as in the upper or lower part of the visual field, or it may affect a specific section of your sight, resembling a curtain-like effect or dark shadow.
- **Flashes of Light or a Sudden Increase in Floaters:** Flashes of light (often described as lightning streaks or "stars") can occur when the retina is being pulled, and an increase in floaters (tiny specks or strings that drift through your vision) can signal that the retina is being stretched or that the vitreous gel inside the eye is detaching. Both flashes and floaters can be early signs of retinal tears or detachment, particularly if they occur suddenly or in large numbers.



### **MORE SYMPTOMS TO WATCH FOR:**

- **A Shadow or Curtain Slowly Descending Over the Eye:** This is one of the hallmark symptoms of retinal detachment. It often starts at the top or side of the visual field and gradually spreads across the eye, like a curtain closing over your vision. This shadow may block part of your vision and can be accompanied by blurriness or distortion, and often indicates that the retina is detaching from its underlying layers.
- **Distorted Vision or the Sensation of a "Grey Veil" Over the Eye:** People experiencing retinal issues may describe a feeling of vision becoming distorted, where straight lines appear wavy or blurred. This may also be accompanied by a gray or dark veil over the central or peripheral vision. This can occur when the macula (the central part of the retina) is affected by a hole or detachment, causing a loss of sharp, detailed vision.
- **Vision Loss that Worsens Over Time or is Not Corrected by Blinking or Adjusting Focus:** If you notice that your vision continues to worsen over a period of time—especially if it doesn't improve with blinking, squinting, or trying to refocus—it may indicate a serious issue with the retina. Conditions like retinal tears or detachment often cause progressive vision loss that will not correct itself naturally, making prompt medical intervention crucial.



*If you experience symptoms like a curtain effect, flashes of light, or sudden vision loss, prompt diagnosis is crucial. Early detection through eye exams, such as a dilated fundus exam or OCT, can help identify issues like retinal detachment.*



## **DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT**

### **Diagnostic Tests:**

- Eye Exam: An optometrist will examine your eyes for signs of retinal detachment or other conditions.
- Dilated Fundus Exam: This allows the doctor to get a detailed view of the retina.
- Optical Coherence Tomography (OCT): An imaging test that provides detailed images of the retina.
- Fluorescein Angiography: A test to visualize blood flow in the retina.
- Fundus Camera/Optos: A specialized diagnostic device that captures detailed images of the retina,

### **Treatment Options:**

- Retinal Detachment: Surgery may be necessary to reattach the retina. Options include laser therapy, cryopexy (freezing), or a vitrectomy (removal of the vitreous gel).
- Retinal Tears: Treatment typically involves laser surgery or cryotherapy to seal the tear.
- Vitreous Detachment: This condition often requires no treatment, but monitoring is important for signs of retinal damage.
- Ocular Migraines: Treatment may involve medication to manage migraines and prevent further episodes.



## PREVENTING RETINAL ISSUES

- **Regular Eye Check-ups:** Routine eye exams are essential, especially as you age, to detect early signs of retinal damage or other eye diseases.
- **Protect Your Eyes from UV Radiation:** Wear sunglasses that block UV rays to protect the retina from damage.
- **Monitor Blood Pressure and Diabetes:** High blood pressure and diabetes can increase the risk of retinal problems, so managing these conditions can help protect your vision.

Saving vision by preventing conditions such as seeing a curtain coming down can prevent vision loss and enhance eye health. Taking proactive and preventive measures is necessary to prevent curtain vision and other avoidable issues from developing.





Watch Our Video:  
Seeing A Curtain Coming Down - EXPLAINED

A retinal detachment is a serious issue and should be treated immediately. Often, immediate treatment can prevent the loss of additional vision. However, if left untreated, retinal detachment can lead to permanent vision damage or loss. Retinal detachment is considered an emergency procedure, and usually require same-day surgery to limit loss of vision.



Watch Our Video:  
Dr D'Orio Symptoms | Seeing A Curtain  
Coming Down

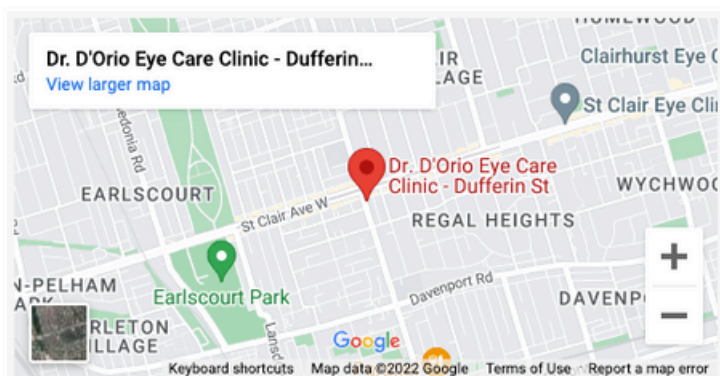
If you have any symptoms associated with a retinal detachment, including seeing a curtain coming down in your eye, you should visit your optometrist or an emergency room immediately for referral to a retinal surgeon to prevent permanent vision loss.



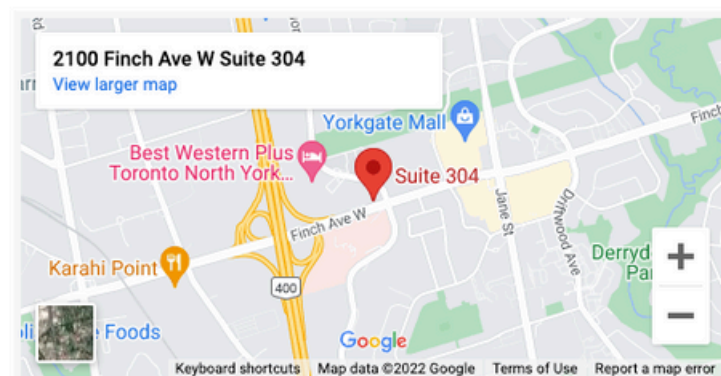


# DR. GREG D'ORIO & DR. STEVEN D'ORIO

## Toronto Location



## North York Location



☎ Toronto: 416 656 2020

☎ North York: 416 661 5555

📠 Toronto Fax: 416 656 2012

📠 North York Fax: 416 661 2594

✉ Email: [info@drdorioeyecare.com](mailto:info@drdorioeyecare.com)

✉ Email: [infofinch@drdorioeyecare.com](mailto:infofinch@drdorioeyecare.com)