

Laser treatment reduces eye floaters

July 20 2017

Patients reported improvement in symptoms of eye floaters after treatment with a laser, according to a study published by *JAMA Ophthalmology*.

Floater become more prevalent with age and although most patients grow accustomed to them, many find them bothersome, and they can worsen visual quality. Three management options exist for floaters: patient education and observation; surgery; and the [laser](#) procedure, YAG vitreolysis, of which there are limited published studies on its effectiveness for treating floaters.

Chirag P. Shah, M.D., M.P.H., and Jeffrey S. Heier, M.D., of the Ophthalmic Consultants of Boston, randomly assigned 52 patients (52 eyes) to receive YAG laser vitreolysis (n = 36) in one session or a sham (placebo) laser treatment (control; n = 16).

Six months after [treatment](#), the YAG group reported significantly greater improvement in self-reported floater-related visual disturbance (54 percent) compared with sham controls (9 percent). A total of 19 [patients](#) (53 percent) in the YAG laser group reported significantly or completely improved symptoms vs 0 individuals in the sham group. Several measures of quality of life also improved compared with those in the sham laser [group](#), including general vision and independence. No differences in adverse events between groups were identified.

A limitation of the study was its small sample size and short follow-up period.

"Greater confidence in these outcomes may result from larger confirmatory studies of longer duration," the authors write.

More information: *JAMA Ophthalmology* (2017). [DOI: 10.1001/jamaophthalmol.2017.2388](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamaophthalmol.2017.2388)

Provided by The JAMA Network Journals

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