

## Annoying eye floater

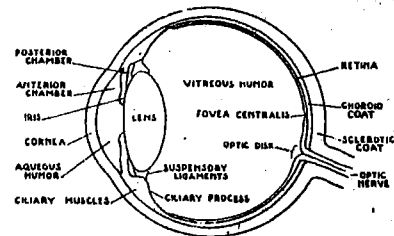
by George Meinig, D.D.S.

Dear Dr. Meinig: Can you give me any information on "floaters" in the eye? It's a film that floats around which is very annoying. They say I have to live with it. Help.

M.M.R.

Dear M.M.R.: The eye is a spherical body whose outer and inner coverings in front of the lens contain a transparent fluid called the aqueous humor. In back of the lens, inside the main body of the eye is the vitreous humor, a jelly-like substance that is also transparent.

Floaters are believed to be tiny, particles of debris coming off the inner lining of the retina and/or the optic disk. As they float about in the vitreous



humor, they occasionally become visible. They are more noticeable in bright light, and more prevalent in the very myopic (near-sighted) people, and old people.

Textbooks don't list any known treatment or preventative measures, but they do say the spots usually become less bothersome with time.

Your letter mentions a film that floats around. I believe you are referring to the floaters or

spots mentioned above. However, there is also another condition which can be considered a film over the eye--when heavy mucus forms and covers the outer surface of the eyeball. This can cause blurring of vision and results in frequent rubbing of the eyes.

It is my feeling, (and I don't have any substantiating evidence) that this condition arises after the consumption of a meal which is heavy in fat; and particularly in people who are deficient in pancreatic and bile digestive enzymes. A number of nutritional supplements have been suggested for mucus, blurred vision, flickering halos, etc. These have also in some cases responded to vitamins B2 and B6, plus magnesium. Others have suggested panthothenic acid, B1, E, liver and yeast.

Brown or red spots come from very slight hemorrhages. If one sees a shower of sparks, a retina detachment is possible. Anyone having any of these symptoms should immediately consult an eye doctor for examination, as the condition can be serious and need prompt treatment.

You have already been examined, so you know the probable cause of your problem, as near as the doctor can tell. As he says, you may have to live with the floaters, but there is nothing to lose, and much to gain, by trying these nutritional suggestions for a while.

### Overcoming Sticky-Gooey Rice

Dear Dr. Meinig: Some rice is sticky and holds together and some is not. I have seen restaurants serve a ball sixed up with an ice cream scoop. This looks nice on the plate, but I really prefer the non-sticky kind. I also prefer brown rice to white rice. How does one keep rice from being sticky?

S.T.

Dear S.T.: You are wise to prefer brown rice because it is far more nutritious. When rice is polished, the shell that

contains most of the food value is lost. Polished (white) rice is mostly starch. Brown rice contains the whole array of vitamins and minerals that are naturally a part of this valuable grain.

It was the use of polished rice food scraps as chicken feed that brought on paralysis among the chickens on a farm nearly a hundred years ago. Later, when brown rice was used instead, Dr. Christian Eijkman, a Dutch surgeon, noted that the chickens recovered, as well as other birds with the same malady. A few years later, 'way back in 1901, a Dr. G. Grijns was the first to conclude that beriberi, in birds or people, was due to the lack of an essential nutrient in the diet. Other researchers enlarged upon these findings, and eventually vitamin B was isolated as the essential element whose absence resulted in the beriberi. This was actually the first vitamin ever to be discovered. And it led to another first: The earliest recognition that inadequate nutrition was fully as responsible for human illness as the germs that had been "discovered" by Pasteur.

And now, nearly 100 years later, millions of people are still using white rice--vast quantities of it--ignoring all these important discoveries of long ago. Even worse is the tremendous (and growing) popularity of "instant rice," both brown and white, which has even less real food value than ordinary white rice.

Brown rice, because of its hard, fibrous outer shell, takes longer to cook, and needs a little more liquid. Lundberg Rice Farm's brochure about rice salads, makes these suggestions in cooking rice:

For 3 or more cups of cooked rice, use the following measurements:

1 cup uncooked rice  
2 cups liquid for regular-milled white rice (for drier rice use 2 tablespoons less liquid) (2½ cups liquid for parboiled or brown rice; for drier rice use ¼ cup less liquid)  
1 tablespoon butter or margarine  
1 teaspoon salt

## Here's a good rice recipe

Combine ingredients in an appropriate-sized saucepan or kettle. Bring to a boil. Stir once or twice. Lower heat to simmer. Cover with a tight-fitting lid or heavy-duty foil.

For Drier Rice: Fluff lightly

with a fork and let stand in a covered pan 5 to 10 minutes.

Oven Method for Cooking Rice: Measure proportions specified using boiling liquid. Place ingredients in baking dish or pan(s); cover. Bake at 350° until rice is tender and liquid is absorbed (approximately 25 minutes for regular-milled white rice; 35 minutes for parboiled rice; 1 hour for brown rice).

My wife feels as you do about rice that is gummy and sticky. She prepares it somewhat differently from the above. Her method is to bring the water to a boil, add the rice and salt, bring to a boil again, then turn the heat down to just below the simmering point. She keeps the cover slightly askew, and cooks for one hour stirring occasionally. The rice she prefers is Lundberg's organically grown, short grain variety. Readers who are interested in their

brochure about rice salads can get a copy by writing to Lundberg Rice Farms, P.O. Box 369, Richvale, CA 95974 -- they have all kinds of rice products, both long and short grain. If you desire more information about these varieties of rice, include that question when you write them.

For pilaf, restaurants seem to prefer long grain rice. They find baking is better for cooking large quantities. Baking rice prevents much of the stickiness.

Brown rice is an excellent, inexpensive food that can be used for breakfast, lunch or dinner. The whole grain is a good source of fiber. It is a good and useful way to add variety to your menus.

Everyone has a question about nutrition. Send yours to Dr. George E. Meinig, c/o Ojai Valley News, Box 277, Ojai, CA 93023.

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