Cryotherapy for Retinal Tears and Detachment

Cryotherapy is a means of freezing the retina where a retinal tear has occurred. This keeps the retina attached in its proper place inside of the eye. The cryo probe is placed on the outside of the eye over the area of the tear. The doctor uses a light mounted on his head and a lens held in his hand to check the position of the probe and make sure it is in the right place. The probe is turned on and a small area is frozen in a few seconds. You will notice a cold feeling in that area. Multiple areas may need to be frozen to seal the tear. Cryotherapy is done on the front half of the retina where a laser cannot be used.

This treatment is done at the clinic. The vision in the eye is checked before the treatment and the eye is dilated. Numbing drops or an injection is placed into the tissue near the area of the treatment. The doctor may also put an antibiotic ointment in the eye after the treatment. This will make your vision temporarily blurry. No drops or ointment are needed after that. The eye takes about 10 days to heal. Please check with your doctor for physical restrictions. You can use Acetaminophen, if needed.

Some people have a cold feeling or “ice cream headache” during or after the treatment. Your vision may be slightly blurry for several days, and the eye may look red for the next few weeks. Please call the clinic if you have any concerns or other symptoms such as increase in floaters or loss of vision.
Phone Numbers

University Station Eye Clinic, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday
(608) 263-7171

When the clinic is closed, your call will be forwarded to the hospital paging
operator. Ask for the “Eye Resident on Call”. Give the operator your name and
phone number with area code. The doctor will call you back.

If you live out of the area, call 1-800-323-8942 and ask to be transferred to the
above number.

Please call if you have any questions or concerns.