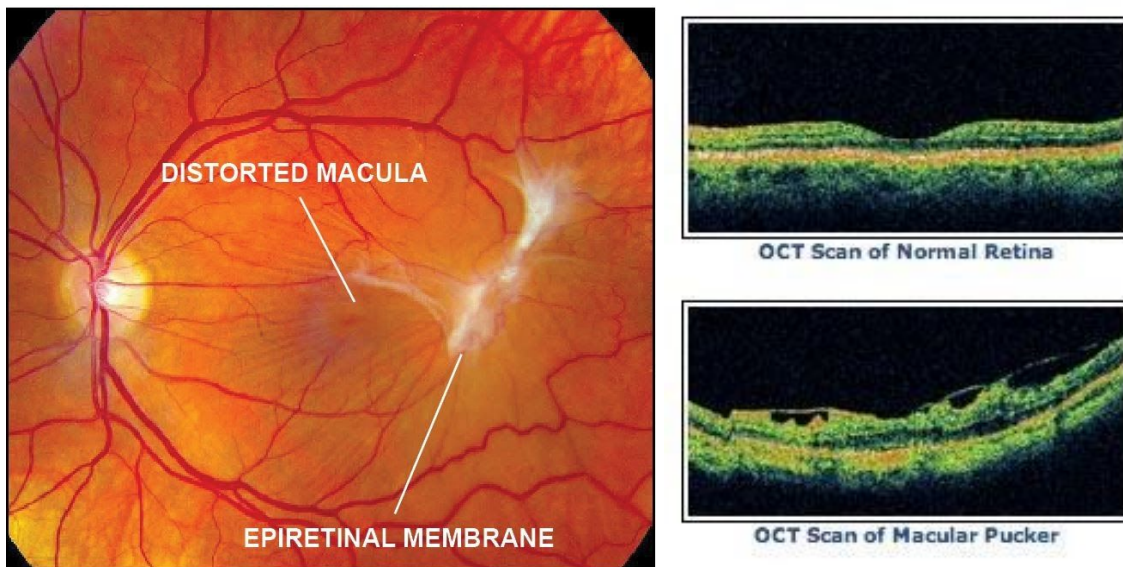


EPIRETINAL MEMBRANE (ERM)

Epiretinal membrane (ERM) is also known as cellophane maculopathy or macular pucker. ERM is an avascular, semitranslucent, and fibrocellular membranes that forms on the inner surface of the retina. Mostly, the common cause is minimal symptoms and can simply be observed, but also in some cases, it can result in painless loss of vision and visual distortion. When affecting the macula, ERM is more symptomatic which is the central portion of the retina that helps us distinguish fine detail used for recognizing faces and reading. Most patients with ERM have no symptoms and are mostly found incidentally through dilated retinal exam or on retinal imaging such as ocular coherence tomography (OCT). Patients may notice visual distortion, where shapes that are normally straight look “wavy” or “crooked” especially when it is compared to the other eye. In most cases, this can lead to severely decreased vision and may also lead to double vision, light sensitivity, or images looking larger or smaller than what they really are.



(Left photo : Fundus photo of macula with epiretinal membrane and macular pucker / Right photo : OCT scan of normal and macular pucker)

There are not many treatments for ERM, but vision should be monitored as long as it is not affecting significantly. There are no eye drops, medications, or nutritional supplements to treat ERM. For surgical treatment there is only one which is called a vitrectomy. The risk and complications with vitrectomy is small, about 1 in 100 patients develop retinal detachment and 1 in 2000 patients develop infection after surgery.