

Focusing on You: Retina Specialist Performs Macular Hole Repair

Delicate procedure restores patients' central vision.

In this segment, Audina Berrocal, M.D., a world-renowned retina specialist at Bascom Palmer Eye Institute, explains what a macular hole is and how it can affect a person's vision. She and her team specialize in macular hole repair that restores central vision. Diana Bell is one of those patients.

MEET DIANA BELL:

When Diana Bell noticed her vision was getting blurry, she went to get her eyes checked. "I was having trouble focusing. I was having trouble driving, especially at night," says Diana.

Turns out Diana had a macular hole in her left eye and was referred to world-renowned retina specialist Audina Berrocal, M.D. at Bascom Palmer Eye Institute.

"Macular holes are a defect right in the center of your macula. And that's where you can read and do fine things. So, for example, you could be reading, and you could miss a letter, or you could be looking at lines and they look wavy," Dr. Berrocal says.

Diana needed surgery to repair the hole and save her central vision. It's a delicate procedure Dr. Berrocal and her team specialize in using microscopic surgery.

"We remove the jelly that fills the eye, that is called vitreous. And then with really fine forceps, we remove a membrane that forms around the macular hole to relax the retina so that the hole can close," explains Dr. Berrocal. She then fills the eye

with gas to form a bubble to keep the hole closed. Patients have to lay face down for a week to keep the bubble in place.

“You then had a contraption that you put on the pillow, and you pretty much slept face down too,” Diana says.

After her recovery, Diana regained sight in her left eye. She says 2022 now looks brighter than ever. “Dr. Berrocal, to me, is an angel on this earth,” says Diana.

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