

THE BEST EYE HOSPITAL
IN KARNATAKA
RANKED #1 FOR MORE
THAN A DECADE

RETINOBLASTOMA



What is Retinoblastoma?

Retinoblastoma is a life threatening eye cancer that affects children. The cancer grows from the retina, which is a sensory layer located inside the eye. Retinoblastoma is a silent tumour, most often detected too late to save the eye. In less fortunate children the tumour affects both their eyes. In early stages of the disease the eye looks normal externally. As the cancer progresses it may be observed by the parents as a white mass from within the eye. This is often missed in the Indian population, and the cancer progresses. Eventually the eye becomes painful, red and swollen. Once the cancer spreads outside the eye the cancer becomes a threat to life, especially when it spreads to the brain and other parts of the body.

What are the signs?

Frequently occurring signs may include:

- The most common way of presentation is a white reflex (leukocoria) behind the pupil.
- Squint eyes or crossed eyes (when both eyes does not look in same direction).



How common is Retinoblastoma?

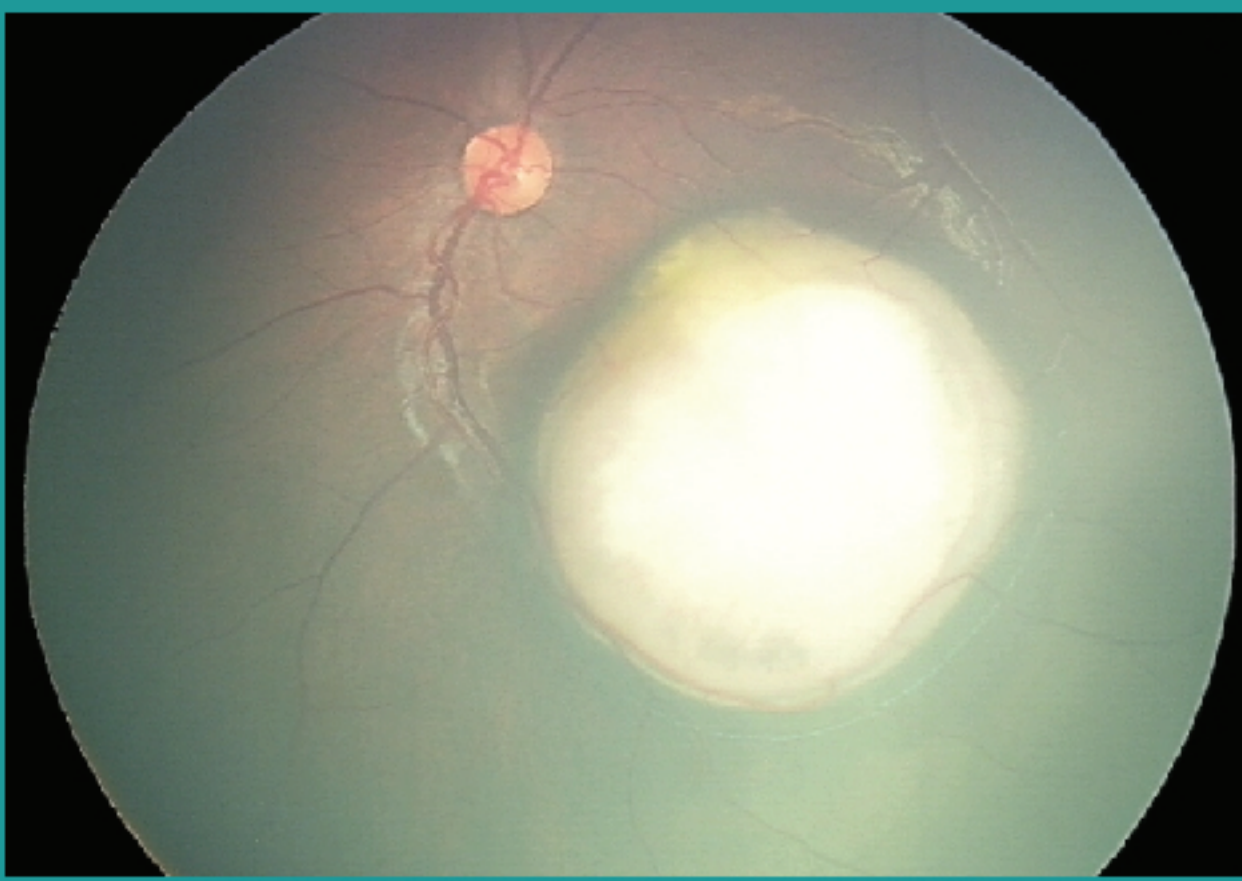
Retinoblastoma is the third most common cancer in a child, occurring in 1 in 20,000 live births. However, effective treatment is available: lives of almost 95% of affected children can be saved.

How is Retinoblastoma treated?

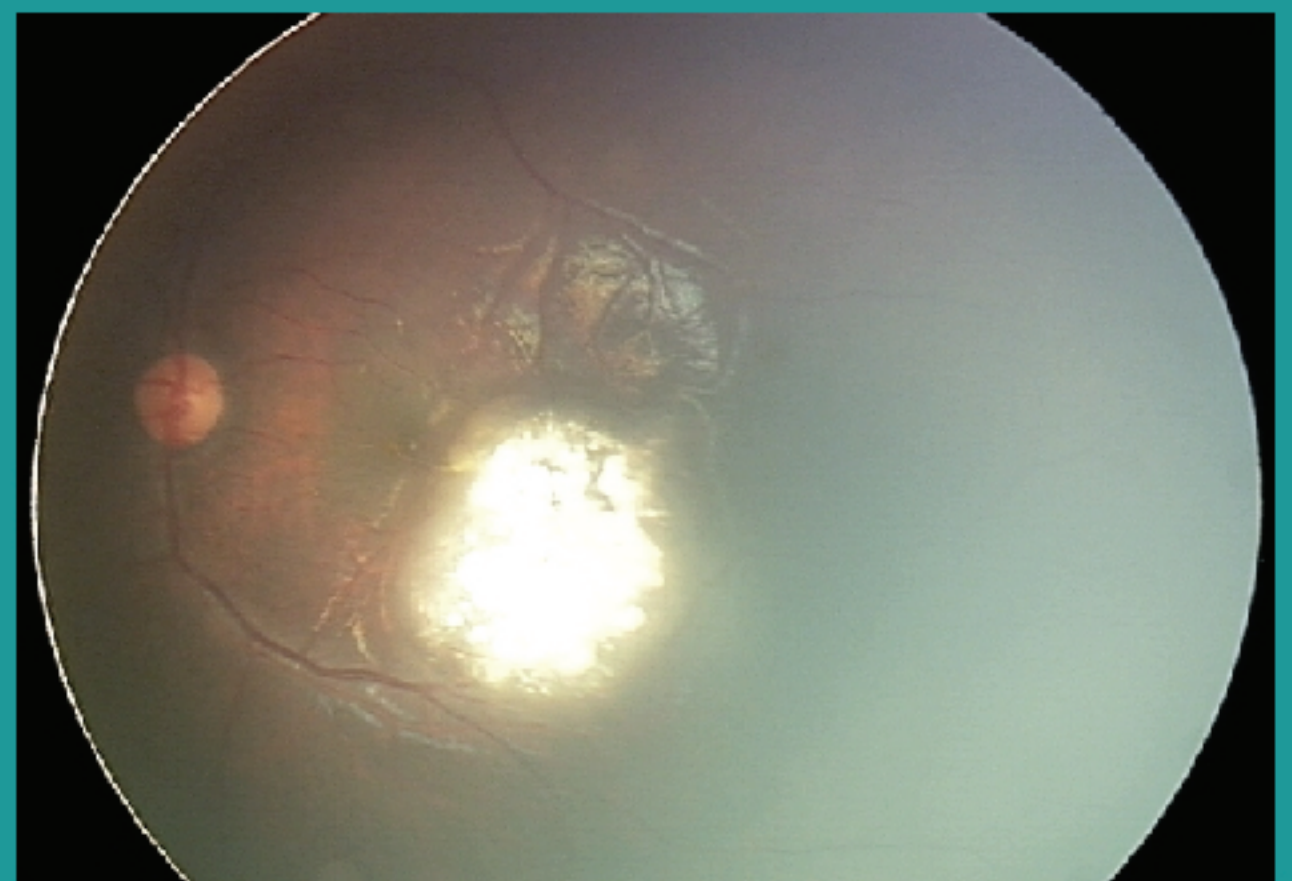
Retinoblastoma is treated with a combination of many techniques- surgery, laser, cryo, chemotherapy and radiation.

First, a thorough examination under anesthesia is done, to know the extent of the disease. In addition, bone marrow and CSF may be checked and MRI done, to see if the cancer is only in the eye, or whether it has spread elsewhere in the body.

The doctor always aims to save the life of the child. If the eye can be saved without putting the child in danger, the best efforts are made to save the eye.

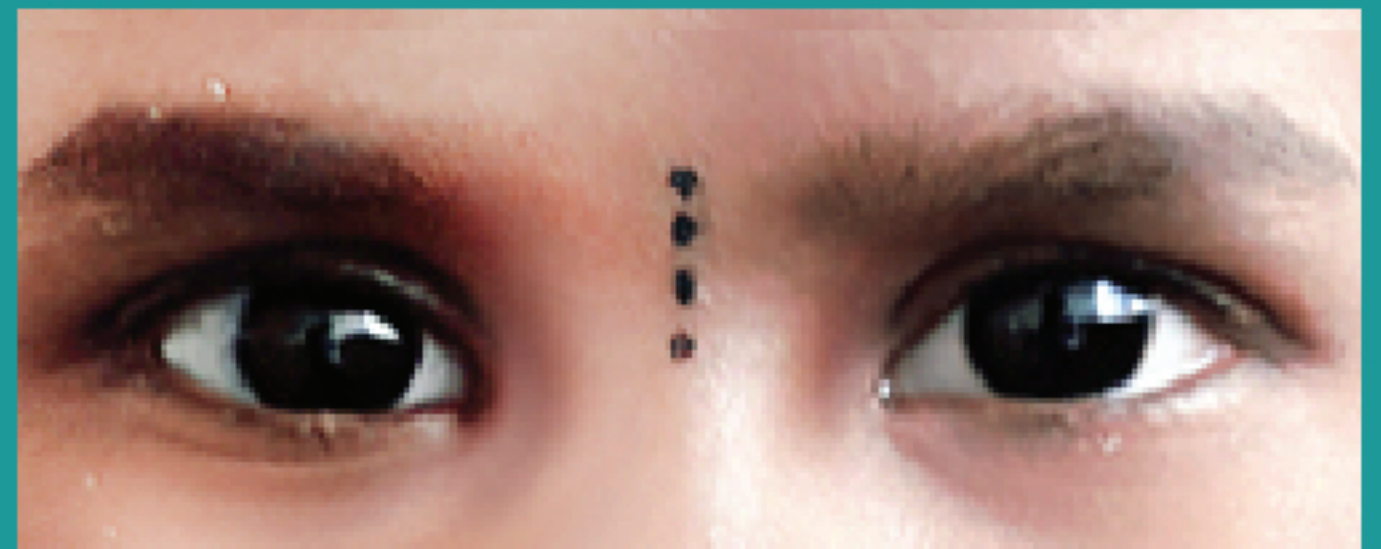
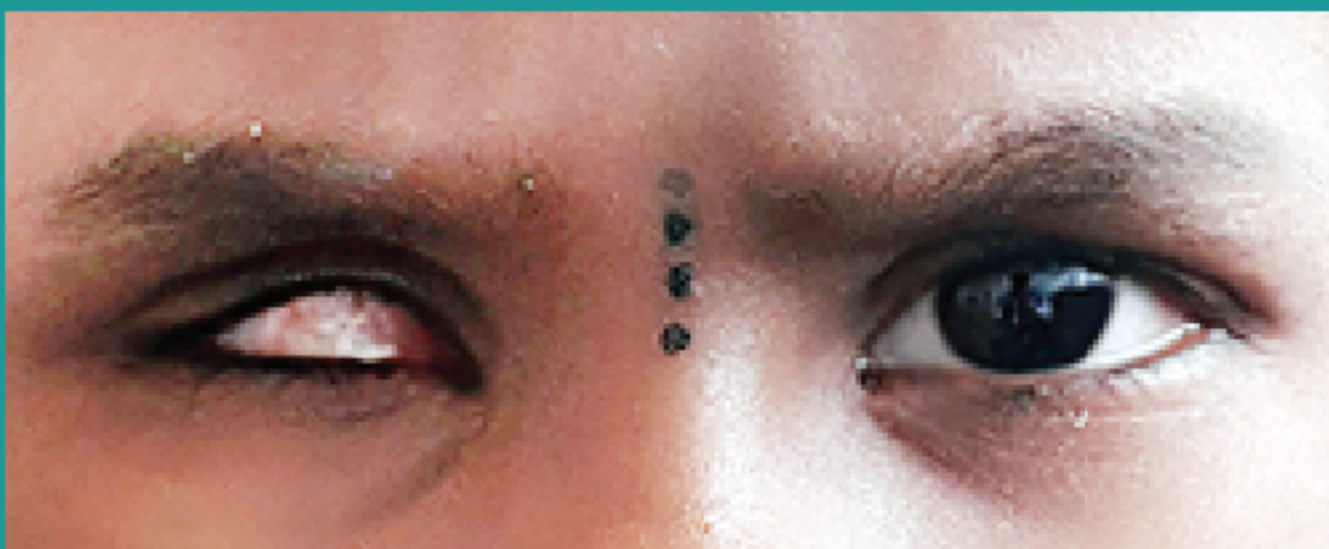


Before



After

Some children have very advanced disease , and the eye has to be removed to save the life of the child. However, with the newest techniques in prosthesis (artificial eye), even such a child can achieve a near- normal appearance. Chemotherapy and radiation may be given in addition, to ensure the continued safety of the child.



SAVE

Life | Eye | Vision

How much does the treatment of Retinoblastoma cost?

The cost of treatment depends on how advanced the retinoblastoma is, and whether the cancer is affecting one eye or both eyes. The costs include chemotherapy, laser and freezing therapy, examination under anesthesia, and surgery.

What is the role of parents in these cases?

Commitment of parents is absolutely crucial for a good outcome of treatment. We encourage the parents to speak to the doctor about how the treatment is progressing, and what the next plan is. Repeated visits for examination (under anesthesia or in clinic) are always required. Sticking to the schedule of treatment, and not breaking off in the middle, gives your child a much better chance for a favourable outcome.

Support for Retinoblastoma affected children

Finding out their child has cancer is overwhelming for many parents. In addition, many patients travel to us from out station. We have coordinators whose responsibility is to guide the parents through the complex process of staged treatment, including scheduling treatment, reminding about appointments, and guidance for other oncology, chemotherapy and MRI appointments.

Financial Support:

We at Narayana Nethralaya believe that no child should be lost to retinoblastoma due to financial constraints. As and when needed, we will guide you to sources of monetary support, from government and non-government agencies. Iksha foundation, in particular, gives a stellar contribution towards support of retinoblastoma treatment, and works with Narayana Nethralaya.

Genetic analysis and counselling:

In some cases the cancer runs in the family. Genetic analysis can tell us whether a brother or sister of the affected child. This information helps to detect the cancer at an earlier stage in other members of the family, and can also help parents plan for a future child.

Providing contact with other families:

From amongst our large database of retinoblastoma patients, we can put the parents in touch with other families. The parents are able to share information, and also feel less helpless when they know they are not alone.

Promoting early detection by raising awareness:

It is unfortunate that in our country, people do not know about this life threatening cancer in children. Too often children come to us at an advanced stage because of lack of awareness. We believe this cancer can be detected early and treated only if the collective awareness about the cancer increases. We intend to improve the awareness both among the health professionals and the general public.

Retinoblastoma Service Contact

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Oculoplasty

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