



3585 BROADWAY • (541) 756-2584  
1-800-422-9393  
FAX (541) 756-5783  
NORTH BEND, OREGON • 97459

JON C. KINTNER, M.D.  
DENNIS E. OTTEMILLER, M.D.  
DEBRA A. GRAHAM, M.D.  
JANE GILBERT, M.D.  
EYE M.D.s

Practice Limited to the Eye  
Cataract Surgery & Intraocular Lenses  
Board Certified, Members of American  
Academy of Ophthalmology

## **Branch Retinal Artery Occlusion (BRAO)**

Most people know high blood pressure and other vascular diseases pose risks to overall health, but many may not know that high blood pressure can affect vision by damaging arteries in the eye.

Branch retinal artery occlusion (BRAO) blocks the small arteries in the retina, the light-sensing nerve layer lining the back of the eye. The most common cause of BRAO is a thrombosis, the formation of a blood clot. Sometimes the blockage is caused by an embolus, a clot carried by the blood from another part of the body. Particles of cholesterol may break loose and be carried into the retinal circulation where they block a vessel.

Central vision is lost suddenly if the blocked retinal artery is one that nourishes the macula, the part of the retina responsible for fine sharp vision. Following BRAO, vision can range from normal (20/20) to barely detecting hand movement, depending on where and how long the blockage lasts.

BRAO poses significant risks to vision. If you have had a branch retinal artery occlusion or have high blood pressure, regular visits to your ophthalmologist are essential. Ocular complications (visual field defects) may be permanent.