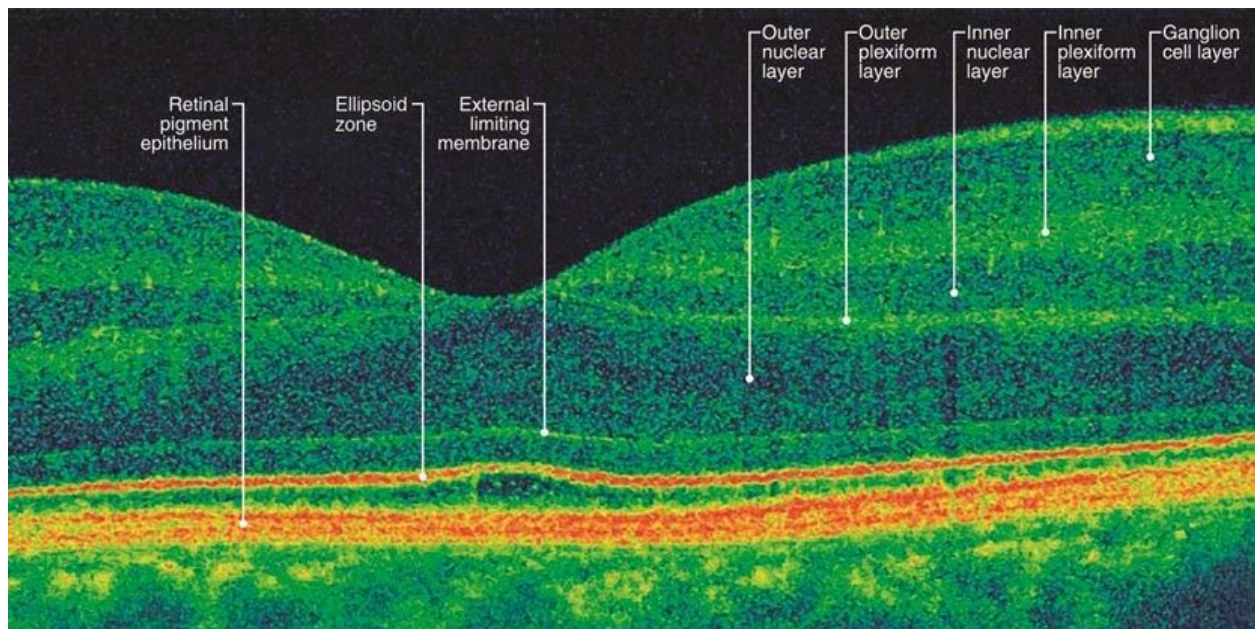


What Is Optical Coherence Tomography?



Written By: [David Turbert](#)

Reviewed By: [Ninel Z Gregori MD](#)

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Optical coherence tomography (OCT) is a non-invasive imaging test. OCT uses light waves to take cross-section pictures of your retina.

With OCT, your [ophthalmologist](#) can see each of the retina's distinctive layers. This allows your ophthalmologist to map and measure their thickness. These measurements help with diagnosis. They also provide treatment guidance for [glaucoma](#) and diseases of the [retina](#). These retinal diseases include [age-related macular degeneration \(AMD\)](#) and [diabetic eye disease](#).

What happens during OCT?

To prepare you for an OCT exam, your ophthalmologist may or may not put [dilating eye drops](#) in your eyes. These drops widen your [pupil](#) and make it easier to examine the retina.

You will sit in front of the OCT machine and rest your head on a support to keep it motionless. The equipment will then scan your eye without touching it. Scanning takes about 5 – 10 minutes. If your [eyes were dilated](#), they may be sensitive to light for several hours after the exam.

[OCT](#) is useful in diagnosing many eye conditions, including:

- [macular hole](#)
- [macular pucker](#)
- [macular edema](#)
- [age-related macular degeneration](#)
- [glaucoma](#)
- [central serous retinopathy](#)
- [diabetic retinopathy](#)
- vitreous traction

OCT is often used to evaluate disorders of the [optic nerve](#) as well. The OCT exam helps your ophthalmologist see changes to the fibers of the optic nerve. For example, it can detect changes caused by [glaucoma](#).

OCT relies on light waves. It cannot be used with conditions that interfere with light passing through the eye. These conditions include dense [cataracts](#) or significant bleeding in the [vitreous](#).

Sources:

<https://www.aao.org/eye-health/treatments/what-is-optical-coherence-tomography>

<https://www.aao.org/eye-health/treatments/what-does-optical-coherence-tomography-diagnose>