

# Retinoblastoma

May 23, 2022

**In news -** World Retinoblastoma Awareness Week (May 15 to 21) was recently celebrated.

## **About Retinoblastoma**

- It is the most common eye [cancer](#) occurring in young children.
- This form of cancer **develops in the retina**, which is the specialized light-sensitive tissue at the back of the [eye](#) that detects light and colour.
- The most common first sign of retinoblastoma is a visible whiteness in the pupil called “cat’s eye reflex” or [leukocoria](#).
- This unusual whiteness is particularly noticeable in dim light or in photographs taken with a flash.
- Other signs and symptoms of retinoblastoma include crossed eyes or eyes that do not point in the same direction ([strabismus](#)), which can cause squinting; a change in the colour of the colored part of the eye (iris); redness, soreness, or swelling of the eyelids; and blindness or poor vision in the affected eye or eyes.
- Retinoblastoma is often curable when it is diagnosed early.
- However, if it is not treated promptly, this cancer can spread beyond the eye to other parts of the body and this advanced form of retinoblastoma can be life-threatening.
- When retinoblastoma is associated with a genetic change (mutation) that occurs in all of the body’s cells, it is known as hereditary (or germinal) retinoblastoma.
- People with hereditary retinoblastoma may have a family history of the disease, and they are at risk of passing on the **mutated RB1 gene** to the next generation.

- It can occur in one or both eyes and may be hereditary or sporadic.