When interpreting RNFL OCT scans, attention should be paid to the presence of peripapillary retinoschisis

**The Science behind the Tip**

Peripapillary retinoschisis (PPRS) occurs significantly more frequently in glaucoma patients (1%-6%) compared to healthy subjects (0.5%)¹. The B-scan of the OCT shows splitting of the RNFL with strut-like structures remaining in the schisis area. A reliable assessment of the RNFL thickness is not possible in such areas. The finding can persist for months to years but eventually resolves spontaneously².

In RNFL analysis, the onset of PPRS is characterized as a sudden, localized increase in RNFL thickness that may mask a pre-existing localized thinning of the RNFL. Conversely, as a PPRS resolves, there is a sudden decrease in RNFL, which can be misinterpreted as rapid progression of glaucoma²³.

Irrespectively, there is evidence that PPRS per se can be a sign of progression¹⁴. However, the exact relationship remains yet to be clarified. When interpreting an OCT RNFL scan, attention should be paid to the presence of a PPRS, and RNFL findings at respective areas should be interpreted cautiously over time.

**References**


**Contributor: Cornelia Hirn, FEBO, FEBOS Glaucoma, Hanusch Hospital, Vienna, Austria**