Drug approved for symptomatic vitreomacular adhesion

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(HealthDay)—Jetrea (ocriplasmin) has been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to treat an eye condition called symptomatic vitreomacular adhesion (VMA).

The condition affects the vitreous, which begins to separate from the macula. This can damage the macula, a key part of the eye's retina that's responsible for people being able to read, the FDA said Thursday in a news release.

Jetrea helps break down proteins that are responsible for VMA, preventing the need for surgery to control the condition, the agency said.

In a clinical study of 652 people, VMA resolved in 26 percent of those who took Jetrea, compared to 10 percent of cases that were resolved among those who took an inactive placebo.

The most common side effects of Jetrea were eye problems including: bleeding, pain, floaters, blurriness, vision loss, and swelling.

Jetrea is produced by ThromboGenics, based in Iselin, N.J.

More information: The FDA has more about this approval.