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YAG LASER Iridotomy

Treatment Leaflet and Patient Consent Form

Having a laser peripheral iridotomy

The aim of this information sheet is to answer some of the questions you may have about having a laser peripheral iridotomy. It explains the benefits, risks and alternatives of the procedure as well as what you can expect when you come to hospital. If you do have any questions and concerns, please speak to Mr Tanner or the nurse caring for you.

What is a laser peripheral iridotomy?

A laser peripheral iridotomy is a treatment used to treat angle closure. If you have healthy eyes, the fluid in your eye (aqueous humour) flows through your pupil into the front of your eye, and drains away through drainage channels called the trabecular meshwork. However, if you have angle closure, these drainage channels are obstructed by the iris (the coloured part of your eye) which has moved forward. Because of this, aqueous humour cannot leave your eye, so your eye pressure increases (also known as intraocular pressure). The build-up of pressure injures your optic nerve – the nerve that carries information from your eye to your brain – and damages your vision.

A peripheral iridotomy uses a laser beam to create a small hole in your iris. This forms a permanent passage through which aqueous humour can flow through and pushes the iris tissue backward, thus unblocking the drainage channels. Aqueous humour is a completely different fluid to your tears – they will not be affected by the operation.

What happens during a laser peripheral iridotomy?

You will need to visit the outpatient department for about 2 hours. We will carry out the treatment in one of our laser treatment rooms. You do not need to do any special preparations such as fasting or changing into operating theatre clothes. Mr Tanner or a nurse will assess your eye first, and check the pressure. It is important that you use your regular eye medication drops as normal on the morning of your laser treatment (unless Mr Tanner has told you otherwise). You will then have some more drops put into your eye. These will usually be a miotic (a drop to make your pupil smaller), a drop to lower the intraocular pressure (the pressure inside your eye due to aqueous), and an anaesthetic eye drop to numb your eye.

You will then sit at a machine similar to the machine used to examine your eyes at the eye clinic. However, there is a special laser attached to this machine. Mr Tanner will put a contact lens on your eye before applying the laser beam. This lens allows a clear view of your iris. The treatment is painless due to the anaesthetic drop used to numb your eye before the laser, but you might get a slight discomfort when the laser is being applied. This takes about 15 minutes.

After the procedure, you will return to the waiting area and Mr Tanner will often check the eye pressure about one hour later.

What are the benefits?

It is important to remember that this procedure is performed to save the sight you still have. It will not restore any sight you may have already lost; neither will it improve your sight. The laser treatment is to prevent a sudden (acute) rise in pressure within your eye. Without having this treatment, you are at risk of developing sudden glaucoma and irreversible blindness.

Are there any risks?

- Complications after this treatment are uncommon.
- Occasionally your eye pressure will rise immediately after laser treatment. If this happens, you may need extra drop treatment or tablets before you can go home.
- Occasionally the laser beam opening is incomplete, or not big enough. This will be assessed after your treatment, and on your follow-up visit. If this is the case, we will have to repeat the treatment at a later date.
- A small number of patients find that extra light enters through the new opening, which can be a little distracting at first. However, most patients find they are soon able to ignore this.
- Other complications are haemorrhage in the eye from the laser and inflammation – this is usually small and can be treated with more frequent steroid drops.
- Certain symptoms could mean that you need to be treated quickly, including: excessive pain or loss of vision. If you experience any of these symptoms please contact the hospital

Are there any alternatives?

An alternative to laser treatment is a cataract operation, which is not suitable for everyone. It also carries a greater risk of complications. There are no other alternatives to open up the drainage channels in your eye. Some patients with this condition also develop a long-term (chronic) rise in their eye pressure. In this case, you may need drops or other treatments in the long-term to keep your eye pressure within safe limits.

What do I need to do to prepare?

As this is an outpatient treatment, you can eat and drink as normal. You must take your eye medication as normal on the morning of the laser treatment (unless instructed not to). Asking for your consent We want to involve you in decisions about your care and treatment. If you decide to go ahead, you will be asked to sign a consent form. This states that you agree to have the treatment and you understand what it involves.

What happens after the procedure?

You will be seen by Mr Tanner in clinic a week or two later to make sure your eye has responded well to treatment. If you have discomfort once you get home, we suggest that you take your usual pain reliever following the instructions on the packet. It is normal to have gritty, sticky eyelids and mild discomfort for a couple of hours after laser treatment. The eye drops can also take some time to wear off, and you should not be alarmed if your pupils are still small for several hours after treatment. The drops can also cause a mild to moderate headache across your brow. Because they make your pupil small, you might find that a dim or dark room is quite dark. Do not panic. The drug will have worn off by the morning, and your pupils should be back to their normal size again. You may also find that your vision is a little blurred. This is normal, and your vision should return to how it was before the laser by 24 hours.

What do I need to do after I go home?

Mr Tanner may prescribe anti-inflammatory drops after your laser treatment. These help to minimise inflammation within the eye. People normally only have to take these for a week at most. You should continue with your usual glaucoma drops unless Mr Tanner tells you otherwise. You can immediately resume all of your normal daily activities.

Please read this form carefully. If you have any further questions, please ask - we are here to help you. You have the right to change your mind at any time, even after you have signed the form.

You can resume normal activities once you have been discharged from hospital. If you experience eye pain or loss of vision:

Please contact Mr Tanner's team on 0800 644 0700 or 0800 644 0900.

Out of hours Main Hospital Switchboards are :

Princess Margaret Hospital, Windsor - 01753 743434

Spire Dunedin Hospital, Reading - 01189 587676

Circle Hospital, Reading - 0118 922 6888

Eye Casualty at Royal Berkshire Hospital, Reading - 0118 322 7162/3

PATIENT CONSENT

Patient details

The above explanation has been read by/to me. The nature of my eye condition has been explained to me and the proposed treatment has been described. The risks, benefits, alternatives, and limitations of the treatment have been discussed with me. All my questions have been answered.

- I hereby authorise Mr Tanner to carry out yag laser iridotomy treatment to my left right or both eyes

Patient's Signature

Date

Confirmation of consent

I have confirmed with the patient that he or she has no further questions and wishes the procedure to go ahead.

Mr Vaughan Tanner **Date**