

YAG Laser Peripheral Iridotomy Treatment for Angle Closure Patient information



An appointment will be made for a check-up in the Eye Clinic shortly afterwards. A number of patients will require more than one laser procedure.

If you are worried after the laser treatment

In the unlikely event of pain not relieved by simple painkillers, a drop in vision or a very red eye, telephone 01480 416416 and ask for bleep 2334 (to speak to the Eye Clinic nurses).

At night or weekends, please contact the Accident and Emergency Department at Hinchingbrooke Hospital.

What is laser peripheral iridotomy?

An iridotomy is a small hole created with the laser beam in the outer part of the iris (coloured part of the eye).

Why is laser peripheral iridotomy performed?

A laser peripheral iridotomy is performed to treat or prevent a sudden rise in pressure inside the eye. The access (called the 'angle') for fluid to escape the eye can become blocked (angle closure) leading to high pressure in the eye. A sustained rise in pressure can cause permanent loss of sight and central vision. The iridotomy allows fluid to circulate freely within the eye minimising the risk of a sight-threatening pressure rise.

There are three reasons for this procedure:-

- To prevent an attack of acute angle closure.
- To treat an attack of acute angle closure.
- To treat primary angle closure where the drainage channel is very narrow.

This laser procedure is performed to preserve sight. It will not restore or improve the sight.

Risks

Complications are uncommon. The most common complications are a rise in pressure and some inflammation shortly after the treatment. The pressure will be checked before you go home and if very high you will need extra treatment (drops, tablets or sometimes an injection). You will also need to remain in the Eye Clinic until the pressure has dropped to a safe level.

Other risks include:-

- Bleeding in front of the iris.
- Clouding of the cornea (window) of the eye.
- Cataract.

The day of your treatment

The treatment takes approximately 15 minutes, but please allow between 1 to 2 hours at the hospital. Your treatment will be carried out in the Eye Clinic by a specialist ophthalmic nurse or doctor. On arrival the doctor will explain the procedure, ask you to

sign the consent form and numb the eye with drops. The procedure is performed with the patient sitting and resting their chin on an instrument similar to that used to examine the eye. A contact lens is placed on the eye to steady it and focus the laser beam. You will see some bright flashes of light, hear a clicking noise and may feel slight discomfort.

After your treatment

The doctor will instil some more eye drops and give you a tablet and the pressure will be checked 1 hour after the treatment. Then you may return home. The eye may become pink and sore and the vision is often disturbed for the rest of the day. For this reason patients are strongly advised not to drive home. Apart from driving, you can resume normal activities immediately. You will be prescribed additional medication for a few days to prevent inflammation and a rise in pressure.

You should continue to use all your anti-glaucoma medication unless specifically instructed otherwise.