

**The purpose of this leaflet is to give you information about argon laser trabeculoplasty treatment for your glaucoma.**

We hope that it will answer a lot of your questions, but please feel free to ask questions of any of the health professionals that you see.

**The procedure**

This is a laser surgery for people with open-angle glaucoma. The laser is used to make a series of tiny burns on the part of the eye that controls how the fluid leaks out from the front part of the eye back into the blood stream.

The laser treatment opens up drainage channels in this part of the eye, and allows more fluid to leak out. Some people respond very well, and, unfortunately, some do not respond at all to the treatment.

We can't predict who is going to have a good response and who isn't. It depends on your type of glaucoma and the physical make-up of your eye.

The laser machine looks very similar to the microscope that is used to examine your eye in the clinic.

The laser itself makes very little noise, and flashes a little. Almost everyone finds the procedure pain-free. It takes about 10 to

20 minutes and may be completed in one or two sessions on different days.

You will be given an eye drop to make the pupil of the eye to be treated small, some people find that this makes the eye ache a little.

When this drop has worked, you will be given a local anaesthetic eye drop, and settled comfortably at the laser machine, with your chin on the rest and your forehead against the band as usual.

At this point a contact lens will be used to give the doctor a good view of the drainage structures in the eye.

This lens needs a small amount of a sticky eye drop to help protect your eye and improve the doctor's view. You may feel this sticky drop running down your cheek. The doctor will then move the contact lens slightly, whilst you stay still, to obtain a good view, and will then start the laser treatment.

**After the treatment**

You may be asked to stay in the department for an hour or two so that the doctor or nurse can check the pressure in your eye after the treatment.

You will usually be given anti-inflammatory drops to use for a week or two after the treatment. These drops and how to use them will be explained to you at the time.

You will normally be asked to continue your normal glaucoma eye drops.

Once you are allowed home, there is no limitation on the activities you can perform although you should not drive for the rest of the day. You will be sent a follow-up appointment to check whether the treatment has worked after a few weeks.

**Benefits of the procedure**

If the treatment is successful it may reduce the pressure in the eye. This reduction in pressure may slow the progression of your glaucoma and so may help preserve peripheral vision.

The effect of the treatment can take up to a year to develop, and wears off after 3-5 years. It can be repeated once in each eye (two treatments per eye).

**Risks of the procedure**

The main risk of the procedure is that it may not work, or that your glaucoma may continue to get worse even though the procedure was successful.

**Other risks are...**

- ❖ The pressure in the eye may go up after the procedure and need extra treatment (which in a very, very few cases might mean surgery)
- ❖ There may be some blurring of vision

after the treatment which will clear in a few hours. The treatment rarely causes bleeding in the front of the eye.

- ❖ Usually this settles quickly, but it may need extra treatment for a few days.
- ❖ The treatment may cause inflammation in the eye or clouding of the cornea (the clear window at the front of the eye). Both of these are usually temporary.

#### Our estimates of the risks

- ❖ Procedure does not reduce pressure  
**1:10**
- ❖ Procedure causes raised pressure requiring prolonged treatment  
**Very Rare**

#### Useful phone numbers

**Forrest Ward (01803) 655507**  
**(Mon – Fri + weekends 17.00 – 08.30)**

**Eye Clinic (01803) 655123**  
**(Mon – Fri 08.30 – 17.00)**

**Hospital switchboard**  
**(01803) 614567**

### ***PATIENT INFORMATION***



## Argon Laser Trabeculoplasty