

Argon laser photocoagulation treatment for your eye

Department of Ophthalmology

Information for Patients

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Why have I been sent an appointment?

You have been put on the waiting list for argon laser photocoagulation treatment. This leaflet answers the most commonly asked questions about the treatment.

Why do I need treatment?

Argon laser treatment can be used to treat a number of eye conditions such as glaucoma, diabetic eye disease, such as diabetic retinopathy, and some holes or tears in the back of the eye (retina).

In diabetic retinopathy, the blood vessels at the back of the eye (retina) may become abnormal. They can start to have tiny leaks, which may then cause fluid to leak into the retina. The retina then becomes wet and swollen and cannot work properly. The blood vessels can also close, causing abnormal new blood vessels to grow. This can then cause bleeding and scar tissue that can result in loss of vision.

In retinal tears or holes, a part of the retina is torn and can sometimes lead to serious loss of vision.

**Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk

How will the laser treat my eye condition?

A focused beam of light (laser) is aimed onto the back of the eye (retina) to carry out the treatment. The laser is applied as spots on the retina. These small burns from the laser should help to seal the abnormal blood vessels or tears in the retina.

This overall should help to stop further loss of sight, but it may not improve your sight.

How do I prepare for this laser treatment?

- You may want someone to come with you, as you will have eye drops put in which may blur your vision after treatment.
- Take all your medication and eye drops as normal.
- You may eat normally before your treatment.
- **You must NOT drive home after having this treatment.**
- Bring sunglasses to wear after your treatment, as the eye drops used may cause you to be sensitive to sunlight.

What happens in the clinic?

The laser treatment will be done by a doctor in the outpatient clinic. The doctor will explain the procedure and answer any questions you may have. We will then ask for your agreement to the laser treatment by asking you to sign a consent form.

Before the laser treatment your vision will be checked and the nurse will put some drops into your eye to make the pupil larger. The drops will take at least 20 minutes to work. You will then be taken into the laser room.

The doctor operating the laser will help you to sit at the machine. The machine looks like the machines in the main clinic; you put your chin on the rest and your forehead against the bar. The doctor will then put a drop in your eye to numb it and a special contact lens is gently put on the front of your eye to help focus the laser.

During treatment it is important that you sit very still and do not look around, so the doctor can work as quickly and as accurately as possible. Depending on the condition of your eye the treatment may take between 10 to 40 minutes.

When treatment is finished the doctor will remove the contact lens. They may give you a prescription for some eye drops for comfort. You will be given a follow-up appointment for the main clinic to check how well the laser treatment has worked.

Will I need a local anaesthetic?

The laser treatment should not hurt. However, if you find it painful, a local anaesthetic injection can be given below your eye, to numb your eye and stop any pain.

After the local anaesthetic injection you may find you may find your sight gets worse for a short amount of time and your upper eyelid may droop slightly. You may also have slight double vision. All of these symptoms usually clear up 4 to 6 hours after having the injection. Other less common risks and side effects include:

- risk of bleeding or bruising.
- the eye and surrounding skin will feel numb until the anaesthetic starts to wear off.
- very rarely a risk of a hole in the globe of the eye (perforation or penetration of the eye).
- very rarely a risk of optic nerve injury.
- an allergic reaction to the anaesthetic.

How will I feel after treatment?

Laser treatment is safe. However, in some cases you may have some discomfort. If you have some discomfort or headache after treatment you can take a simple painkiller such as paracetamol.

Your vision will be blurred for several hours after the laser treatment and because of this we would advise you not to drive to your appointment.

Are there any risks or long-term side effects?

- After laser treatment you may notice some blurring or spots in your vision, which usually gets better within a month.
- In some rare cases people may get a problem at the back of the eye. If you have a shadow in your vision or lots of black spots (floaters) or flashing lights, you should go to the Eye Casualty Department straight away.
- A lot of retinal laser treatment may lead to your night vision getting worse.
- Very rarely new abnormal vessels may appear at the site of the laser burns.
- Sometimes the laser treatment does not work and you will need to have further treatment.

Contact details

If you think you may have a problem with your eye after treatment, contact the **Eye Casualty Department on 0116 258 6273**, or go to Eye Casualty which is located in the Windsor Eye Clinic, Level 1, Windsor Building, Leicester Royal Infirmary:

Opening times: Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 4.30pm

Saturday & Sunday, 8.30am to 12.30pm

If your problem happens outside of these hours and you feel it is urgent, you should go to the main Adult Emergency Department at Leicester Royal Infirmary.

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔
على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل

જો તમને અન્ય ભાષામાં આ માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો નીચે આપેલ નંબર પર કૃપા કરી ટેલિફોન કરો

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।

Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

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