

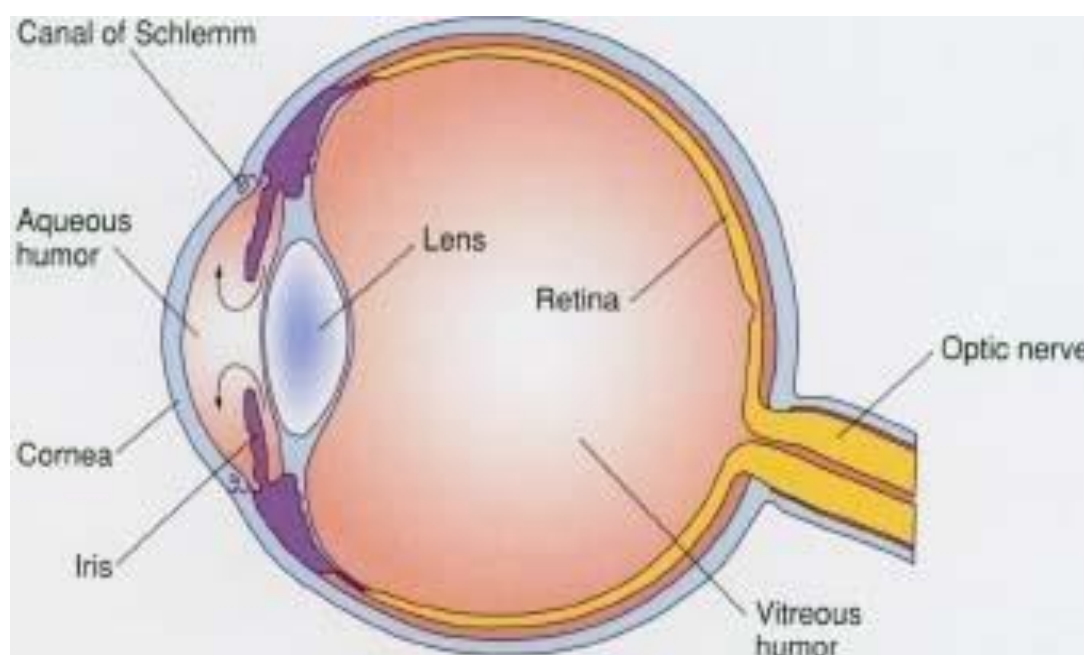
Information for Patients

Laser Iridotomy

What is laser iridotomy?

There are many different types of glaucoma and the treatments are varied. Laser iridotomy is a treatment that is used for patients who have, or who are at risk of developing, acute angle closure glaucoma, or who have chronic closed or narrow angle glaucoma.

Acute angle closure glaucoma occurs when the flow of the watery fluid, called aqueous humour, becomes blocked and builds up causing the pressure in the eye to become very high very quickly. Chronic closed or narrow angle glaucoma can occur when the iris (coloured part of your eye) is pushed forward onto the delicate drainage system which then restricts the flow of aqueous humour so that the pressure within the eye goes up.



Laser iridotomy is the preferred treatment in these cases and is used to prevent the pressure rising in patients at risk. The laser delivers a highly

concentrated beam of energy which is used to make a small hole in the iris. This small hole allows the aqueous humour to flow freely into the front chamber of the eye.

What happens on the day of treatment?

The nurse will check your vision and put some drops into your eye to make your pupil smaller. These drops are used to prevent the pressure rising within your eye. The drops take up to one hour to work. The doctor will take your written consent and explain further if you have any questions. You will also have anaesthetic drops put into your eye to numb the front surface.

Once seated in front of the laser machine, which is similar to the microscope you will have been examined on in clinic, a special lens will be placed against the front surface of your eye. During the laser treatment you will hear clicking noises. You might feel a slight pain lasting a second or less 'and it could feel a little strange.

After the laser treatment, you will have further drops put in your eyes to help reduce any inflammation caused by the laser. The pressure in your eye will be checked about an hour after the treatment, before you go home. You will then receive a prescription for drops to use at home and an appointment to come back to the clinic.

Are there any risks or side effects of this treatment?

Your vision could be slightly blurred for a few hours following your laser treatment, but this will settle. If you are concerned that your vision is not returning to normal please contact the hospital on the numbers below. Please do not drive yourself to the hospital, as you will be unable to drive home.

There might be a little bleeding inside your eye, which will initially blur your vision; however, this will clear in a few days' time. Your eye might feel slightly bruised afterwards and sometimes your eye could become inflamed but the drops you have been given to use will control any inflammation and should help to relieve discomfort.

You might wish to take pain relieving medication, for example Paracetamol, to relieve any additional discomfort. **If you are already taking pain relief for a different condition continue with those, but do not take both.**

It is possible for the pressure in your eye to increase immediately after the treatment. In order to prevent this we put in some special drops before and immediately after the treatment.

The small hole in your iris is usually hidden under the upper eyelid and cannot be seen with the naked eye. However, very occasionally, it can cause glare or other problems. If you suffer with glare or other problems following your treatment please contact a member of staff on the numbers below.

How successful is laser iridotomy?

Laser iridotomy is very successful. However, occasionally the small hole can partly or completely heal up in the first few days after the laser treatment. Further laser treatment might be necessary following your review in clinic. This is usually very successful. Laser iridotomy is very good at protecting against acute angle closure glaucoma.

Further information

The information in this leaflet is intended as a guide only, as each patient's experience will be different. If you require any further information or are concerned about your eye following laser treatment, please contact your consultant's secretary.

If you are experiencing pain or visual loss and are unable to contact your consultant's secretary, please ring the Emergency Eye Department on (0161) 276 5597 between 8.00 am - 8.15 pm every day or Ward 55 on (0161) 276 5512, available 24 hours every day.