

Information for Patients

Electrolysis of Eyelashes

Why do I need to have electrolysis?

You may have a second row of eyelashes that has formed or a small number of eyelashes that are growing in an abnormal direction or in an abnormal position. These lashes can rub against the cornea, the front clear window of your eye and the conjunctiva, the membrane that protects the eye.

This rubbing can lead to excess watering of the eye, crusting of the eyelid, discharge, a feeling that something is in the eye, and impaired vision. Due to some or all of these problems your doctor has decided that you need electrolysis to some of your eyelashes.

What should I expect?

Electrolysis is performed under local anaesthetic as an out-patient treatment. You can return home shortly after the procedure. A nurse practitioner who is specially trained in electrolysis will carry this out. Following an injection of local anaesthetic to numb the eyelid, an electrolysis needle is passed down the follicle of the troublesome eyelashes. A small electrical current passes into the follicle through the needle. This aims to stop any further growth of the eyelash by destroying all the cells that make the eyelash grow. The eyelashes are removed at this time.

Are there any risks?

There are some small risks associated with electrolysis and these include:

- Bruising from the injection.
- Scarring of the eyelid.
- Infection.
- Recurrence of the eyelash that may require further treatment.

If you have an internal pacemaker it is important to inform the nurse prior to any treatment. Certain electrolysis machines can interfere with internal pacemakers.

Afterwards your eyelids may appear swollen and red, this is normal.

Antibiotic ointment will be prescribed for you to use 4 times a day for 1 week. This can blur your vision for about 5 minutes. Occasionally patients may be intolerant of the ointment; this can cause itching, redness and swelling. If you know that you are intolerant of any antibiotic or cream, please tell the nurse treating you.

If you have any of these symptoms please contact us on the number below so that a different ointment can be prescribed. We recommend that you clean your eyelid 2 times a day with cooled boiled water and cotton wool for 1 week following your electrolysis.

An appointment will be made for you to see the nurse practitioner in the out-patients department approximately 6-8 weeks following electrolysis.

If you are worried or wish to ask any questions about this information, please contact the Oculoplastic nurse practitioner via the hospital switchboard on: (0161) 276 1234 and ask the operator to bleep 5235 or 5605, Monday – Friday, 9.00 am - 4.00 pm or contact staff on Ward 55 through the hospital switchboard (0161) 276 1234. They are available 24 hours every day.