

# Having cyclodiode laser for glaucoma

This leaflet aims to answer your questions about having cyclodiode laser for glaucoma. It explains the benefits, risks and alternatives, as well as what you can expect when you come to hospital.

If you have any further questions, please speak to a doctor or nurse caring for you.

## What is a cyclodiode laser?

This is a type of laser used in patients with glaucoma where other types of treatment have failed or would be of little use.

If you have healthy eyes the fluid in your eye (aqueous humour) flows through the pupil into the front of the eye. It then drains away through drainage channels. If you have glaucoma, the fluid in the eye cannot drain away properly.

This can result in a build up of pressure within the eye. This high pressure injures your optic nerve – the nerve that carries information from your eye to your brain – and damages your vision.

The cyclodiode laser is a highly concentrated beam of light, which can be used to target and treat a selected area. The aim of the laser therapy is to lower the pressure in the eye, by reducing the production of fluid within the eye. The reduced production of fluid causes the eye pressure to fall.

## What happens on the day of the treatment?

It is important to use your normal eye drops and other medications on the day of your treatment unless your doctor has told you not to.

The operation is normally performed under local anaesthetic (where the eye is numbed). The laser is then applied through the sclera (the white of your eye) using a pen-like instrument. At the end of the procedure, an injection of steroid is given to help reduce inflammation that may occur following the laser treatment. An eye pad will be applied over the eye. You will be given drops to take at home. The procedure normally lasts around 20 minutes.

You will probably need to continue your glaucoma eye drops or tablets – you will be advised of this before you leave. We will arrange an appointment to come back to the clinic usually one to two weeks later.

## Why should I have cyclodiode laser treatment?

It is important to remember that this procedure is performed to save the sight you still have. **It will not restore any sight you may have already lost; neither will it improve your sight.**

Cyclodiode laser treatment is generally successful and well tolerated. In some patients, the treatment has the additional benefit of reducing pain caused by high pressure.

## **What are the risks?**

Your eye may be red and sore when the anaesthetic wears off. If this happens, you should take normal painkillers. Your sight may be blurred for a few days or even a few weeks, but it should settle down to how it was before the laser treatment was performed.

**In 30% of cases, patients need repeat treatment with the laser to achieve low pressure in the eye.**

It is rare to have any serious complications after this procedure. In some cases reduced vision may last for up to six weeks. The pressure may be too high or low following treatment. In very rare cases persistently very low pressure can cause permanent loss of vision and alter the cosmetic appearance of the eye.

If you experience any problems, such as sudden loss of vision or pain, please telephone the Ridley Clinic for advice immediately or visit your nearest accident and emergency (A&E) department.

## **Are there any alternatives?**

This type of laser is used in patients with glaucoma where other types of treatment have failed or would be of little use.

If you do not have the laser treatment, there is a risk that the sight, or the pain, in your eye will get worse because of the glaucoma. Your doctors will have thought about these risks when deciding whether or not to advise you to have the laser treatment

## **Giving my consent (permission)**

The staff caring for you may need to ask your permission to perform a particular treatment or investigation. You will be asked to sign a consent form that says you have agreed to the treatment and that you understand the benefits, risks and alternatives. If there is anything you don't understand or if you need more time to think about it, please tell the staff caring for you.

Remember, it is your decision. You can change your mind at any time, even if you have signed the consent form. Let staff know immediately if you change your mind. Your wishes will be respected at all times. If you would like to read our consent policy, please tell a member of staff.

## **Will I feel any pain?**

You may experience pressure on the eye during treatment but it is very rare that you will experience pain.

## **What should I do if I have a problem?**

If you develop any of the symptoms featured in this leaflet, or need urgent advice about your eye(s), please telephone the Ridley Clinic:

t: 020 7188 4304, Monday to Friday, 9 to 5pm, **or**

t: 020 7188 7188, Monday to Friday, 9 to 4pm and ask for eye casualty.

Outside of clinic hours, please call the switchboard on **020 7188 7188** and ask to be put through to A&E.

## **Further information**

### **Pharmacy Medicines Helpline**

If you have any questions or concerns about your medicines, please speak to the staff caring for you or call our helpline.

**t:** 020 7188 8748 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

### **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)**

To make comments or raise concerns about the Trust's services, please contact PALS. Ask a member of staff to direct you to the PALS office or:

**t:** 020 7188 8801 at St Thomas'    **t:** 020 7188 8803 at Guy's    **e:** [pals@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@gstt.nhs.uk)

### **Knowledge & Information Centre (KIC)**

For more information about health conditions, support groups and local services, or to search the internet and send emails, please visit the KIC on the Ground Floor, North Wing, St Thomas' Hospital.

**t:** 020 7188 3416

### **Language support services**

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch using the following contact details.

**t:** 020 7188 8815    **fax:** 020 7188 5953

### **NHS Direct**

Offers health information and advice from specially trained nurses over the phone 24 hours a day.

**t:** 0845 4647    **w:** [www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)

### **NHS Choices**

Provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make choices about your health.

**w:** [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

**For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit [www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/leaflets](http://www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/leaflets)**