

Eye Unit - Ophthalmology

YAG Laser Information

Introduction

Cataract surgery involves removal of the natural lens from within the eye. This natural lens is replaced by a plastic lens implant placed inside a natural capsule (bag) within the eye. During your examination it has been found this capsule has become thickened; you may also feel your vision has deteriorated as if the cataract is developing again.

What is YAG laser treatment?

An opening in this capsule is made with a YAG laser to allow more light in the eye, improving your vision. YAG is the type of laser used for this surgery.

Where is the procedure carried out?

The procedure is carried out in the Outpatient Department and on the day of treatment, you may eat and drink as usual.

What happens when I arrive?

- You will be seen by a member of nursing staff who will check your vision. If you normally wear distance glasses (driving/television), please bring these with you.
- After the vision test you will have dilating drops instilled into the eye to be treated. These will take a short while to work and then you will be called into the laser room. Your vision will be blurred for the next few hours.
- It may help to wear sunglasses on your journey home.
- You are strongly advised not drive yourself and arrange alternative transport home.

Risks

The treatment is safe but rarely complications can occur; these may include:

- Raised eye pressure
- Inflammation within the eye
- Retinal detachment
- Damage to the implant

Procedure

- Once your pupils are sufficiently dilated, you will be called into the laser room. The clinician carrying out the procedure will explain the treatment to you.
- Following this you will be asked to sign a consent form.
- Local anaesthetic drops will be instilled in your eye, and you may also be given drops to control your eye pressure.
- You will then be positioned on the laser machine; this involves you keeping your



Patient Information

- chin on the chinrest and your forehead against the bar.
- A contact lens with lubricating jelly will be placed on your eye to keep your eyelids apart and to focus the laser beam.

The treatment is painless and only takes a few minutes, but you will be dazzled by the bright light and you will hear clicking noises.

What happens next?

Following the treatment, you will be asked to sit in the waiting area for a short while to allow you to recover from the dazzle of the bright lights. Your vision will be checked again by the nursing staff and then you may leave. If you have been prescribed eye drops following the procedure, you can collect these from the pharmacy on your way out. If a follow-up appointment is needed, this will be arranged for you and sent in the post.

After treatment

You can expect an improvement in your vision almost immediately after the procedure, this can continue for the next few hours. Sometimes floaters are noticed after the treatment, but usually disappear or become less noticeable shortly afterwards.

It is important to bear in mind the treatment can only improve the vision which was lost due to the thickening of the capsule. Sometimes little or no improvement occurs and this is due to a problem in the retina (back of the eye).

Following the treatment

If you suddenly develop any of the following symptoms following your treatment then you must contact Eye Casualty on the number below.

- A shower of floaters or increase in number of floaters
- Flashing lights
- Loss of vision, like a curtain or a shutter

Eye Casualty: Telephone: 024 7696 6627

Open from Mon - Fri: 8.30am – 4.30pm & Sat: 9.00am -12.00pm

Outside Eye Casualty opening times, please attend the main Accident and Emergency Department where you will be assessed and referred on to an ophthalmologist if required.

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format please contact 024 7696 6627 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy

Document History

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