

Eye Unit

YAG Laser Peripheral Iridotomy (PI)

What is a YAG laser peripheral iridotomy?

A peripheral iridotomy is a very tiny hole created with a laser in the outer part of the iris (the coloured part of the eye). This is usually not visible with the naked eye as it is very small and we usually aim to place it so that it is covered by the upper eye lid. In some cases it may be placed elsewhere in the peripheral iris.

Why is laser peripheral iridotomy performed?

A laser peripheral iridotomy is usually performed to treat or prevent a sudden rise in pressure inside the eye (acute glaucoma). It can also be used in some patients with chronic glaucoma to help control the pressure in the eye. Untreated, a sustained rise in pressure can cause a permanent loss of vision. The peripheral iridotomy allows fluid to circulate freely within the eye minimising the risk of a sight-threatening pressure rise.

This laser is performed to **preserve** your sight. It will **not restore or improve** your sight.

Are there any risks?

This procedure is regularly carried out in the Ophthalmology department and complications are uncommon. The most common complications are a temporary rise in pressure and some inflammation shortly after the treatment. The pressure will be checked before you go home. If it is very high, you will need extra treatment in the form of drops or tablets. You will only be sent home when the pressure is controlled.

Other risks include:

- **Bleeding from the iris:** there may be a tiny bleed inside the eye and this can cause temporary blurring of vision. This bleeding is usually small and is easily stopped by pressure on the eye for a few minutes.



Patient Information

- **Discomfort:** this can usually be controlled with regular painkillers.
- **Further treatments:** some people need more than one laser session or surgery.
- **Raised Eye Pressure:** some patients may have a persistent rise of intraocular pressure (fluid pressure inside the eye) after the laser treatment requiring further medication, laser or surgery.
- **Inflammation:** it is common to have some inflammation, which settles down with medication. Uncommonly the inflammation may be persistent and may affect vision by causing fluid build-up at the back of the eye.
- **Clouding of the cornea (clear window) of the eye:** this usually goes away on its own, but it may cause blurred vision for some time.
- **Cataract (clouding of the lens):** laser can sometimes cause a cataract to develop more quickly than it would naturally have developed.
- **Visual disturbance:** uncommonly you may get glare, halos, and lines in the vision, double vision or dislike of bright lights.
- **Decreased vision:** marked permanent decrease in vision is very uncommon
- **Rare complications:** retinal detachment.

Please discuss any concerns you have with the doctor before the procedure.

What happens when I arrive?

You will initially be seen by the ophthalmic nursing staff who will check your vision and put some drops in your eyes to prepare you for the laser treatment. The doctor will discuss the procedure, the risks and benefits and ask you to sign a consent form and may put in some more drops.

Patient Information

Procedure

The procedure usually takes between 5-15 minutes. The doctor will initially numb the eye with some drops and ask you to rest your chin on the laser machine. The machine is similar to the instrument used to examine the eye in the clinic. During the procedure you will see some bright flashing lights and also hear some clicking noises. Some patients may feel some light discomfort but it is essential that you remain still. Once the procedure is complete you will need to wait to get your eye pressure checked approximately 45-90 minutes after the procedure to ensure it remains stable. Your visit will usually take three hours in total.

What happens next?

You will be usually be given some drops to use for two weeks to control any inflammation within the eye. **Your vision may be blurred for the rest of the day so we advise you not to drive home.** You can usually resume other normal activities immediately. You will be sent an appointment for follow up in the eye clinic in two weeks' time. If you do not receive an appointment then please do contact us.

You should continue all your other eye drops unless instructed otherwise.

If after the treatment you suddenly develop any of the following:

- Pain and/or redness in the eye
- Decreased vision
- Flashing lights
- Loss of vision, like a curtain or a shutter

Please contact the Eye Casualty: Telephone: **024 7696 6627**

Open Monday – Thursday, 8.30am – 4.30pm, Friday, 8.30am – 4.00pm
and

Saturday, 9.00am - 12.00pm.

Outside these times, please attend the main Accident and Emergency Department where you will be assessed and referred on to an Ophthalmologist if required.

Patient Information

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format please contact 024 7696 6606 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy

Document History

Department:	Ophthalmology
Contact:	024 7696 6606
Updated:	August 2019
Review:	August 2021
Version:	5
Reference:	HIC/LFT/1620/13