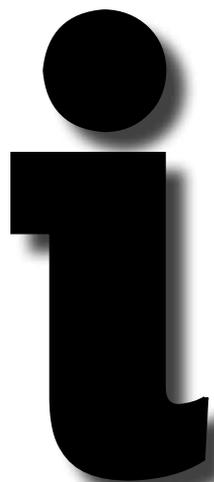


# **Laser Peripheral Iridotomy (PI)** *(page 1 of 3)*



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You are entitled to a copy of any letter we write about you. Please ask if you want one when you come to the hospital.

Please complete The Friends & Family Test to tell us about your experience at: [www.salisbury.nhs.uk/FriendsFamily](http://www.salisbury.nhs.uk/FriendsFamily) or download our App from the Apple App store or Google Play Store.

The evidence used in the preparation of this leaflet is available on request. Please email: [patient.information@salisbury.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@salisbury.nhs.uk) if you would like a reference list.

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This procedure uses a laser beam to create a small hole in the iris (the coloured part at the front of your eye). This forms a permanent passage through which fluid can flow. It is used to treat angle closure in predisposed individuals or patients with angle closure glaucoma. In healthy eyes, the fluid in the eye (aqueous humour) flows through the pupil into the front chamber of the eye, and drains away through drainage channels, however, in angle closure, these channels are obstructed by the iris (the coloured part of the eye) which has moved forward. Because of this, the fluid cannot leave the eye, so the eye pressure may increase. If untreated this may damage the optic nerve – the nerve that carries information from the eye to the brain – and the vision.

The laser treatment is to prevent or treat a chronic or sudden (acute) rise in pressure within the eye. Without having this treatment, you are at risk of developing irreversible blindness from impending or ongoing pressure damage.

Aqueous humour is different to tears, they will not be affected by the operation. 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.

## **Are there any alternatives?**

An alternative to laser treatment is a removal of the lens like a cataract operation, which is not suitable for everyone. It also carries a greater risk of complications. There are no other alternatives to open up the drainage in the eye. Rarely, drops like Pilocarpine can be used temporarily but they do not provide a long-term solution.

## **Are there any risks?**

Complications after this treatment are uncommon. Occasionally the pressure inside the eye rises immediately after the laser treatment. If this happens, you may need extra treatment, in the form of drops or tablets before you go home.

Your doctor will let you know which treatment you need and will advise you of how long you need to take the treatment for. If we do treat you with eye drops, a doctor or nurse will put them in your eye before you leave hospital. You will be asked to remain in the department until your eye pressure has reduced to a satisfactory level. This should take a few hours at most.

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**01722 336262 ext 5366**

Sometimes the hole created may not be large enough. This will be discovered either after your treatment, or on your follow-up visit. If this is the case, we will have to repeat the treatment at a later date. A small number of patients find that extra light enters through the new opening, which can be a little distracting at first. However, most patients find they are soon able to ignore this.

Other complications are haemorrhage in the eye from the laser and inflammation – this is usually small and can be treated with frequent steroid drops. Extremely rarely, some patients can get the onset of a cataract.

The Pilocarpine drops used can give a temporary headache after the procedure. The eye drops can also take some time to wear off, and you should not be alarmed if your pupils are still small for several hours after treatment. Because they make your pupil small, you might find that a dim or dark room is quite dark. The drug will have worn off by the morning, and your pupils should be back to their normal size again.

The following symptoms mean that you need urgent treatment, if you experience any of these symptoms, telephone the Clinic for advice immediately, or visit your nearest accident and emergency department:

- Excessive pain
- Sudden onset of floaters not present before.
- Loss of vision
- Flashing lights
- Increasing redness of the eye.

### **What happens during the Laser Treatment?**

You will need to visit the outpatient department for a few hours. We will carry out the treatment in one of our laser treatment rooms. You do not need to do any special preparations such as fasting or changing into operating theatre clothes. The doctor or nurse will assess your eye first.

It is important that you use your regular eye drops, if previously prescribed, as normal on the morning of your laser treatment (unless your doctor has told you otherwise). You will be asked to sign a consent form to signify that you have understood what is involved and agree to have the procedure. You will have some drops put into your eye including an anaesthetic to numb the eye. You will then sit at a machine similar to the machine used to examine your eyes at the eye clinic, with a special laser attached.

The doctor will put a special contact lens on your eye before applying the laser beam. The treatment is painless; but you might get a slight discomfort when the laser is being applied. This takes between 10 and 15 minutes per eye. You may need to have both eyes treated. After the procedure, you will return to the waiting area. Your clinician may check the eye as necessary.

### **What happens after the procedure?**

After the treatment, most patients find that their vision is blurry for a few hours. The eyes can be sensitive to bright lights. Because of this, it can be helpful to have someone to go home with you, but this is not essential. You should not drive; ride a motorbike or bicycle for the rest of the day.

### **What do I need to do after I go home?**

Following the procedure, no special precaution is required, and you can go back to your normal daily activities straight away. If you have discomfort once you have returned home, we suggest that you take your usual pain reliever following the instructions on the pack. It is normal to have itchy, gritty eyes and mild discomfort for the remainder of the day after the treatment.

In some cases you may be prescribed a short course of Anti-inflammatory drops. These help to minimise inflammation (not infection) within the eye. You carry on with other treatments as normal. You can do all of your daily activities as you would normally without any problems including returning to work the next day.

You will be asked to come to the outpatient department some weeks after the laser treatment to make sure your eye has settled down properly. This appointment will be given to you before you leave the hospital. Your clinician will advise you when you need to be seen again. If you are using glaucoma drops to the untreated eye, please continue to use them unless clearly instructed otherwise.