

Selective Laser Trabeculoplasty (SLT) *(page 1 of 3)*



Selective Laser Trabeculoplasty is a procedure used to reduce pressure in the eye. This is done in patients who have high pressure in the eye which may lead to damage or glaucoma. In this procedure, a laser beam is applied to the drainage channels in the eye. This results in improved drainage of fluid (aqueous humour) from the eye, thus reducing the pressure.

Aqueous humour is a different fluid to your tears which will not be affected by this 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 or improve your sight.

SLT is successful in about 3 out of 4 patients. If the treatment is successful, you may be able to reduce the number of eye drops you currently use to manage your glaucoma. Or you may not need to start drops.

Not all patients are suitable for this treatment. This is not a one-off treatment, and may need to be repeated in the future to control the eye pressure. You may still need to be prescribed eye drops.

Are there any alternatives?

Some patients may be more suited for eye drops or surgery. Surgery has a higher complication rate. Your clinician will advise you further.

What do I need to do to prepare?

Since this is an outpatient treatment, you can eat and drink as normal. You must continue to take any eye drops and other medication as normal on the day of the treatment (unless instructed otherwise). After the procedure you will not be able to drive or ride a motorbike/bicycle until the following day.

Are there any risks?

Complications after these treatments are uncommon and the procedure is relatively safe and effective. Occasionally the pressure inside the eye rises immediately after the treatment. If this occurs, you may need extra treatment in the form of drops or tablets.

Sometimes inflammation can affect specific structures of the eye that may cause short-lasting blurring of the sight. A small bleed may also happen but this usually clears without any treatment.

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

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Extremely rarely, some patients can get a serious complication:

- A build-up of fluid in the macula (called macular oedema), the part of the eye responsible for detailed central vision, which causes blurring or distortion of central vision
- The fluid build-up can push the back layers of the eye forward (choroidal effusion). Very rarely inflammation (less than 0.01%) can result in a change in your spectacle correction.
- Accidental burns causing scar to the sensitive part of the retina (macula).
- Accidental burns causing swelling at the front of the eye (corneal oedema).
- A haemorrhage in the eye.

If you experience any of the following symptoms, telephone the Eye Clinic for advice immediately, or visit your nearest accident and emergency department:

- Excessive pain
- Sudden onset of floaters not present before.
- Loss or significant blurring 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 15 and 30 minutes per eye. You may need to have both eyes treated. After the procedure, you will return to the waiting area. Your clinician may then 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 treatment 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 painkiller; following the instructions on the pack. It is normal to have itchy, gritty eyes and mild discomfort for the remainder of the day after this treatment.

Your clinician will tell you if or when you need to be seen again. Any appointment will be given to you before you leave the hospital.

In some cases you may be prescribed a short course of anti-inflammatory drops. These help to minimise inflammation within the eye. You should carry on with other treatments as normal.

You can do all of your daily activities as you would normally, including returning to work the next day.

Please continue to take any medication you were taking before the procedure, unless specifically advised not to do so.