

## Surgery and Cancer Division – Ophthalmology

### Trabecular Microsurgery

#### Introduction

Your Ophthalmologist has recommended that you require Trabecular microsurgery. You will be provided with written information regarding your Trabecular surgery when you attend the Eye Care Centre at Leighton Hospital. If you do not receive written information about your surgery, please contact the Eye Care Centre on 01270 278110.

#### Guidance for Patients

In most forms of glaucoma the damage to the optic nerve and vision is caused by raised pressure inside the eye. The pressure is caused by the circulation of a clear fluid call 'aqueous humour', which normally nourishes the eye. Usually this fluid drains away through a filter-like tissue close to the iris on the inside of the eye call the trabecular meshwork. Sometimes this tissue loses its effectiveness and pressure builds up inside the eye, slowing pressing on the optic nerve causing damage.

Trabecular microsurgery is a minimally-invasive glaucoma surgery to lower eye pressure. A small incision is made in the eye and a specially designed device is used to bypass a section of the trabecular meshwork. After the operation, aqueous humour can directly drain through the channels and away into the blood stream, lowering the eye pressure. The surgery can be performed in isolation but often works best when combined with cataract removal. The cataract can be removed using the same incision. However, if you have already had cataract surgery it can still work well.

Prior to surgery a thorough medical preoperative assessment is carried out. The preoperative assessment assesses your fitness for surgery and will help us to identify potential medical risks which may need attention prior to surgery.

The operation is done in theatre and usually takes up to 20 minutes but this can be longer if combined with cataract surgery. Usually numbing drops or injectable local anaesthetic are used for comfort but occasionally a general anaesthetic may be considered on an individual basis.

After the operation you will be transferred to the ward or daycase unit. You should be able to go home after a few hours. You should have someone with you to drive you home. As with any eye surgery, heavy lifting other strenuous activities should be avoided for at least one week. Although some patients will enjoy clear vision the next day, the visual recovery in many cases is not as rapid and may take several days to improve. This may affect your ability to drive or use equipment during this time.

Your surgeon may recommend reducing your usual glaucoma eye drops after surgery. They will then be adjusted over the following weeks depending on the pressure control. On discharge you will be given eye drops to use which are important to help reduce the risk of inflammation and infection.

## How can I prepare for my surgery?

While you are waiting for your procedure it is important that you consider the following in the short term to support your well-being.

- If you smoke, stopping smoking now may reduce your risk of developing complications and will improve your long-term health.
- Try to maintain a healthy weight. You have a higher risk of developing complications with any surgery if you are overweight.
- Regular exercise should help to prepare you for the operation, help you to recover and improve your long-term health.
- If you have not had the coronavirus (Covid-19) vaccine, you may be at an increased risk of serious illness related to Covid-19 while you recover. Speak to your doctor or healthcare professional if you would like to have the vaccine.

## What should I do if my health is deteriorating?

If you feel you are becoming more unwell, **please contact your GP or NHS 111 for medical review in the first instance.** Your GP will be able to advise if this is something they can support with during your wait or they will be able to contact your Ophthalmologist to discuss their findings in more detail and determine a management plan.

## Contact Us

Admission Date - Please call the Ophthalmology Scheduling Team 01270 278110.

Emergency Ophthalmic Advice - Please call 01270 255141 and ask for Eye Triage.