

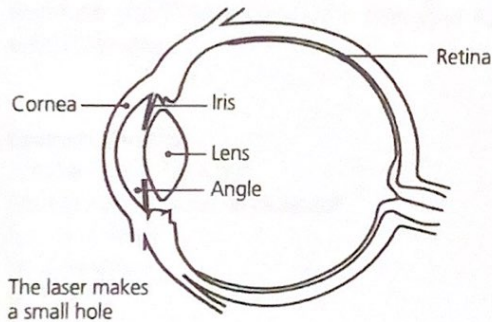
Patient information factsheet

YAG laser iridotomy

What are narrow angles?

The pressure in each eye is kept at the right level by fluid coming into the eye. It flows in behind the iris, then forward through the pupil and leaves the eye in the 'angle' - the gap between the edge of the iris and the clear window at the front of the eye (cornea).

In some eyes the angle is narrower than it should be which can stop fluid leaving the eye and cause a severe rise in pressure. This can be painful and can cause permanent eye damage.



What is a YAG laser iridotomy?

YAG laser iridotomy involves using a laser to make a small hole in your iris (the coloured part of your eye). This allows the fluid to move more freely and usually prevents any sharp pressure rise. It is common for both eyes to need this treatment.

What happens during the laser treatment?

We'll give eye drops to make your pupil smaller, which can often cause a slight headache above your eye. Once you're sitting in front of the laser machine, we'll use further drops to numb the surface of your eye.

The doctor will place a special contact lens onto the front of your eye and aim the laser at the iris to make a small hole. It can be a little uncomfortable and many experience a feeling of pressure at the back of their head for a second. The treatment takes about 5 minutes per eye.

You'll need to bring your glasses with you so that we can check your vision.

Are there any risks with this procedure?

This treatment is usually straightforward and complications are rare but may include:

- a significant pressure rise which needs to be treated with drops and tablets before you can go home
- bleeding, which can blur the vision until it clears
- inflammation
- awareness of light entering the eye through the new hole

Whilst one treatment is usually enough, we may recommend further laser treatment at a later date if the

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What happens after the treatment?

We may give you a further drop or a tablet to prevent a short-term pressure rise in the eye and you may be asked to wait an hour so that your pressure can be checked.

The doctor will tell you what drops you need to use until your next clinic appointment.

Your vision will be misty for the first few hours and then should improve.

If you get severe pain or continued misting of vision this may mean the pressure in the eye has risen sharply. If this happens call eye casualty on **023 8120 6592** (24 hours).

Please make your follow-up appointment before you leave the department

An important reminder

Please do not drive yourself to the hospital. You will need to travel by public transport or arrange for someone else to take you home after your appointment. You should not drive or operate machinery for the rest of the day.

Contact details

Southampton Eye Unit
Southampton General Hospital
Tremona Road
Southampton
SO16 6YD

If you have a query about your laser appointment call **023 8120 8918**.

If you need a translation of this document, an interpreter or a version in large print, Braille or on audio tape, please telephone 023 8120 4688 for help.