BUNBURY & BUSSELTON EYE SPECIALISTS

PATIENT INFO AND ADVICE

What is Laser for Glaucoma?

Laser for the treatment of glaucoma

Glaucoma is a disease of the optic nerve. When damage to optic nerve fibres occurs, blind spots develop. These blind spots usually go undetected until the optic nerve is significantly damaged.

The most common form of glaucoma is chronic open-angle glaucoma. The increased pressure inside the eye develops slowly and painlessly destroys the nerve fibers in the optic nerve.

Early detection and treatment are the keys to preventing blindness from glaucoma.

How is glaucoma treated?

The eye constantly produces fluid. If the drainage from inside the eye becomes blocked the pressure increases.

Treatment involves:

- Eye Drops - Turns the tap down
- Laser - Cleaning out the drainage (SLTP)
- Surgery - Puts a new drainage hole into the side of the eye

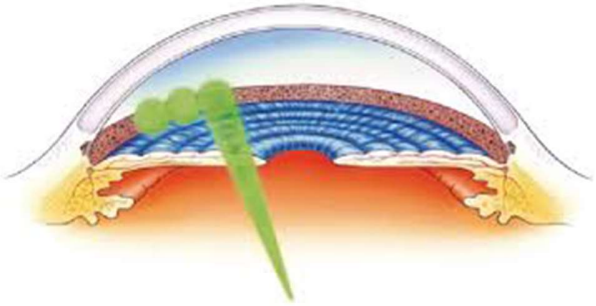
How can selective laser trabuloplasty help treat open-angle glaucoma?

Selective laser trabeculoplasty (SLTP) uses a YAG laser to focus light energy on the drainage channel of the eye (the plug hole of your eye). The treatment allows the drain to work more efficiently, lowering eye pressure in more the 80% of people treated.

After five years the eye pressure returns in approximately half of the people treated with SLTP. I will need to continue to monitor your eye pressure and can repeat the SLT treatment if needed.

Laser surgery can reduce the amount of medication you may need. SLT can also be used in addition to taking medicines or as a first line of treatment.

How is SLT done?



The procedure is performed in the clinic and usually takes less than 10 minutes. First, anesthetic drugs are used to numb the eye. You will experience a flash of light with each laser application. There is rarely discomfort with this treatment.

Your vision will be blurry immediately after treatment but should clear within hours. Most people can return to their normal activities the day after laser surgery.

It will take several weeks for the laser treatment to take full effect.

What are the risks of SLT?

As with any surgery, there are some risks of complications with SLT. Possible complications include:

- Failure to adequately lower the eye pressure;
- Increased pressure in the eye, possibly requiring medications or surgery to lower it;
- Inflammation in the eye causing pain, redness or blurred vision.

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