

## Patient information

# Corneal Impression Membrane

## St Paul's Eye Department – Royal Liverpool Hospital

Your doctor has advised you to have a sample taken from your eye.

### **What is a corneal impression membrane?**

We have found you to have an infection of the clear window of the front of the eye. In order to find out the cause of the infection, a sample needs to be taken from your eye. A corneal impression membrane is a small piece of soft filter paper that is used to collect the sample. After numbing your eye with an anaesthetic eye drop, the paper will be placed on the front surface of your eye for a couple of seconds and then removed.

### **What are the benefits of having a corneal impression membrane?**

The sample will enable us to identify the microorganism causing your eye infection. This will enable us to treat your eye infection more effectively. Before the corneal impression membrane was brought into clinical practice, samples were obtained using a sterile surgical blade. This method requires a lot of your co-operation and often not enough sample is collected to enable a result to be obtained. The corneal impression membrane increases the chances of a positive result being obtained and is much less invasive.

### **What are the risks?**

It is important for us to bring to your attention that the corneal impression membrane has only been recently introduced into clinical practice and does not currently have Conformité Européene (CE) approval.

This means that the corneal impression membrane has not yet been through European health and safety testing. Taking samples from your eye using the corneal impression membrane method is very safe and it is extremely unlikely that you will come to any harm during the sampling process. Although there are no reported risks, there is the potential risk of causing a foreign body type of sensation to your eye for several hours following the procedure.

### **Are there any alternatives available?**

The alternative is to take a sample from the clear window of the front your eye using a sterile surgical blade (this method is called a corneal scrape).

### **What will happen if I decide not to have the corneal impression membrane?**

You will still be offered a corneal scrape. You will still receive treatment and the treatment will not change if you decide not to have a corneal impression membrane sample taken.

### **What sort of anaesthetic will be given to me?**

Your eye doctor or eye nurse will put some anaesthetic eye drops onto the front surface of your eye to numb your eye so that you do not feel any discomfort or pain. This may cause some stinging for a very short period of time.

**If you are worried about any of these risks, please speak to your Consultant or a member of their team.**

### **Further Appointments**

Your eye doctor will arrange a follow-up appointment for you in the outpatient department.

## **Feedback**

Your feedback is important to us and helps us influence care in the future.

Following your discharge from hospital or attendance at your outpatient appointment you will receive a text asking if you would recommend our service to others. Please take the time to text back, you will not be charged for the text and can opt out at any point. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

## **Further information**

**If you need any further information please contact Corneal Nurses or Professor Kaye on the following telephone numbers.**

**Monday to Friday**

**Telephone number: 0151 706 3917**

**Text phone number: 18001 0151 706 3917**

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