

## Patient information

# **Trabeculectomy+/- Antimetabolite**

Ophthalmology Department - Aintree Hospital

### **Who is this leaflet for?**

People with glaucoma who are having a trabeculectomy.

### **What is a Trabeculectomy?**

A surgical procedure that improves the drainage of fluid from the eye.

### **Trabecu What?**

- Trabecu- the start of the drain of the eye.
- -ectomy means to remove, so we remove part of the drain of the eye.

### **Why do I need it?**

- The eye's drain is not working properly.
- The fluid builds up in the eye and the eye pressure goes up.
- High pressure can worsen your glaucoma.
- Sometimes, your eye pressure is not high but you still require surgery to lower it.

### **What is the benefit of surgery?**

To lower the pressure inside your eye.

## **How does it work?**

By removing part of the drain, fluid is allowed to drain under the skin of the eye where it is absorbed into the bloodstream.

## **Is the surgery guaranteed to work?**

No. We allow the fluid to leak under the skin of the eye (you do not get tears down your cheek). This leak can scar up.

If you scar, the operation can fail and the eye pressure may go up.

To combat this, we usually apply an anti-scarring agent during surgery. This is called an anti-metabolite

## **Are there alternatives to surgery?**

There are three ways to lower the pressure inside the eye on a long-term basis: eye drops, lasers and operations.

You may already be using eye drops, but they did not lower the eye pressure enough, you are getting side-effects.

Generally, an operation is reserved for patients in whom eye drops and lasers have not worked or are not suitable.

## **What happens at time of surgery?**

- You can expect to be in hospital for half a day. Occasionally, we keep you in overnight, but this is unusual.
- We freeze the eye with an injection. You can request a tablet to help you relax or you may have chosen sedation.
- You can have a general anaesthetic so that you sleep through your operation.
- The operation takes about an hour.
- Occasionally, the surgery is combined with a cataract operation.

## **What does it feel like?**

After surgery, we will pad the eye overnight. The eye usually feels a bit sore and scratchy for the first few days. Take some painkillers as necessary.

**The sight is blurred for to two to three weeks. This is normal.**

## **What about my medication?**

- All medication, including any regular eye drops, should be taken on the day of surgery unless otherwise instructed.
- After the operation, you stop your usual glaucoma eye drops. Continue all eye drops in the other eye.
- The aim is that the eye pressure is lower. Sometimes, you still need glaucoma drops after surgery to keep the pressure down.
- You will be given some antibiotic and steroid eye drops for the operated eye. These will continue for a few weeks.

## **What are the risks and possible complications of surgery?**

- Inflammation. The eye can become red, sore and blurry after surgery. This is why you will be prescribed steroid drops.
- Blindness. This is rare. If you get an infection, this can lead to blindness. If the eye is very painful after surgery, ring us.
- Leak. Occasionally, you need further stitches. If this occurs, it does not normally alter the outcome of surgery.
- Failure. Some people's eye pressure does not change enough following surgery. If this is the case, you may need anti-glaucoma eye drops or another operation.
- Low pressure. Sometimes the pressure is too low. This may mean more surgery.

- Cataract. You have a higher chance of cataract after this operation. This may mean more surgery in the future.
- Ptosis. A droopy eyelid. It usually lifts after a few weeks.

## **What happens after the operation?**

You can go home when you feel ready.

The operated eye will be padded, so you may need some assistance to get around.

Remove the pad the morning after surgery and start your drops when you get up.

You will be given an appointment for the next day and eye drops to go home with. The following day, we will check your eye.

You can expect an outpatient appointment up to once a week for 6 weeks where:

- You may have stitches removed to let the pressure down. This is normal.
- You may need injections around the eye to reduce the scarring. This is normal.
- You can expect to be on some drops for up to 12 weeks after surgery.

## **Post-operative Instructions: Trabeculectomy.**

- No bending or heavy lifting for two weeks.
- Reading, TV and using the computer: fine.
- Do not drive until your surgeon says it is OK to do so.
- Keep the eye dry for two weeks. This is to reduce the chance of infection.

## **Who do I contact if I have questions or concerns?**

**In an emergency: 0151 525 5980 and ask to speak with the on-call eye doctor.**

**Secretary for Mr Dubois and Mrs Bhargava:  
Tel:0151 529 0147.**

## **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**

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**In an emergency:**

**Tel: 0151 525 5980 and ask to speak with the on-call eye doctor.**

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**Author: Ophthalmology Department  
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