

Patient information

## **Viscocanalostomy**

Ophthalmology Department - Aintree Hospital

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

People with glaucoma/ high eye pressure who are having a viscocanalostomy.

### **What is a Viscocanalostomy?**

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

### **Visco what?**

Visco- relates to a substance that is used to open up the drain of the eye.

- Canal- refers to the drain.
- -ostomy means to make a hole. So we make a hole in the drain of the eye.

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

- The eye's drain is not working properly.
- So the fluid in the eye is not drained out enough and the eye pressure goes up.
- High eye pressure can lead to glaucoma or your glaucoma may get worse.

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

- To lower the pressure inside your eye.

## **How does it work?**

- The drain of the eye is like a sieve.
- Surgery allows the sieve to drain better.
- Your eye surgeon may combine this operation with cataract surgery. See the cataract surgery leaflet for information.

## **I only have high eye pressure, not glaucoma. Can I have surgery?**

Yes. The idea is to prevent you from getting glaucoma.

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

No. Occasionally, it does not, in which case you may need further treatment.

The operation may work for ever, although not in every case.

If the pressure creeps up over time, you can have laser to open up the drain; or you can start using eye drops again; or you can have more surgery.

## **Laser after Visco canalostomy**

- Is called goniotomy.

- Makes tiny holes in the drain, effectively turning the sieve into a colander.
- This can make the operation work better.
- 50:50 chance of lowering the eye pressure back to how it was after surgery.

## **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, or you find it difficult to use the drops.

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

## **What if I don't want surgery?**

Then your eye surgeon will recommend more eye drops to lower the pressure in your eye, or a laser procedure.

## **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.

Just before surgery you will have an injection around the eye to freeze it.

You may also have chosen to be sedated during the operation. You can have a general anaesthetic so that you sleep through your operation.

The operation takes an hour, or a bit longer if combined with cataract surgery.

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

After surgery, we pad the eye overnight. It can feel a bit sore and scratchy for a few days. Take painkillers as necessary.

The sight in the eye is commonly blurred for two to three weeks. This is normal.

### **What about my medication?**

After the operation, you will be asked to stop your usual glaucoma eye drops. Continue all eye drops in the other eye.

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 be red, sore and blurry for a few weeks. This is why you will be prescribed steroid drops.
- Blindness. This is rare. If you get an infection, this can blind you. If the eye is very painful after surgery, ring us.
- Leak. If the eye leaks after surgery, it usually settles. Rarely, we have to put more stitches in, meaning more surgery.

- High pressure. Steroid drops can raise the pressure. In this case, we stop the steroid drops and the pressure comes down.
- Failure. In this case, you may need laser, more eye drops or another operation.

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

- You can go home when you feel ready.
- You may need assistance to get around.
- You will be given an appointment for the next day and eye drops to go home with.
- The next morning, remove the dressing and start putting in your drops.
- We check you or ring you the next day.
- We then see you after one week and then six weeks, all being well.

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

- No bending or heavy lifting for two weeks.
- Reading, TV and using the computer are 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.

## **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**

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

**In an emergency:**

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

**Secretary for Mr. Dubois and Mrs Bhargava:**

**Tel: 0151 529 0147.**

**Author: Ophthalmology Department**

**Review date: April 2026**

All Trust approved information is available on request in alternative formats, including other languages, easy read, large print, audio, Braille, moon and electronically.

يمكن توفير جميع المعلومات المتعلقة بالمرضى الموافق عليهم من قبل انتمان المستشفى عند الطلب بصيغ أخرى، بما في ذلك لغات أخرى وبطرق تسهل قراءتها وبالحروف الطباعة الكبيرة وبالصوت وبطريقة برايل للمكفوفين وبطريقة مون والإلكترونية.

所有經信托基金批准的患者資訊均可以其它格式提供，包括其它語言、易讀閱讀軟件、大字體、音頻、盲文、穆恩體 ( Moon ) 盲文和電子格式，敬請索取。

در صورت تمایل می‌توانید کلیه اطلاعات تصویب شده توسط اتحادیه در رابطه با بیماران را به اشکال مختلف در دسترس داشته باشید، از جمله به زبانهای دیگر، به زبان ساده، چاپ درشت، صوت، خط مخصوص کوران، مون و بصورت روی خطی موجود است.

زانیاری پتوهندیدار بهو نه خوشانهی له لایهن تراستهوه پسههند کراون، نهگمر داوا بکریت له فورماتهکانی تردا بریتی له زمانهکانی تر، نیزی رید (هاسان خویندنهوه)، چاپی گموره، شریتی دهنگ، هیلای موون و نلنیکترونیکی همیه.

所有经信托基金批准的患者信息均可以其它格式提供，包括其它语言、易读阅读软件、大字体、音频、盲文、穆恩体 (Moon) 盲文和电子格式，敬请索取。

Dhammaan warbixinta bukaanleyda ee Ururka ee la oggol yahay waxaa marka la codsado lagu heli karaa nuskhadda kale, sida luqadda kale, akhris fudud, far waaweyn, dhegeysi, farta braille ee dadka indhaha la', Moon iyo nidaam eletaroonig ah.