

Trabecular Microsurgery

Patient Information



We Care
Because
You Matter

Trabecular microsurgery

Raised Eye Pressure and Glaucoma

In most forms of glaucoma the damage to the optic nerve (and therefore the sight) is caused by raised pressure inside the eye. The pressure is caused by the circulation of a clear fluid called 'aqueous humour', which normally nourishes the eye. Usually this fluid drains away through a filter-like tissue close to the iris on the inside of the eye called the trabecular meshwork. Sometimes this tissue loses its effectiveness and pressure builds up inside the eye, slowly pressing on the optic nerve causing damage.

What is trabecular microsurgery?

Trabecular microsurgery is a minimally-invasive glaucoma surgery to lower eye pressure. A small incision is made in the eye and a specially designed device is used to bypass a section of the trabecular meshwork. After the operation aqueous humour can directly drain through the channels and then away into the blood stream, lowering the eye pressure.

The surgery can be performed in isolation but often works best when combined with cataract removal. The cataract is removed using the same incision. However, if you have already had cataract surgery it can still work well.

Usually numbing drops or injectable local anaesthetic are used for comfort, but occasionally a general anaesthetic may be considered on an individual basis.

What are the benefits of trabecular microsurgery?

Your Ophthalmologist may consider that you have glaucoma that is not sufficiently controlled with eye drops or laser. You may also have cataract causing visual symptoms (blurred vision, glare).

What are the risks?

As with all surgery there is an element of risk. In addition to the usual risks of cataract surgery, there is often a small amount of bleeding into the front of the eye which may temporarily blur the vision. All eye surgery carries a very rare chance of loss of vision because of infection or severe bleeding under the retina.

Can I go home the day of surgery?

Yes, trabecular microsurgery is a day case surgery that normally takes up to 20 minutes; longer if combined with cataract surgery. You will go home the same day of surgery and will normally be seen the first day after the procedure, and then one week later in the eye clinic. You should have someone with you to drive you home.

When will I be able to resume normal activities?

As with almost any eye surgery, heavy lifting and other strenuous activities should be avoided for at least one week. Although some patients enjoy clear vision the next day, the visual recovery in many cases is not as rapid as following normal cataract surgery, and may take several days to improve. This may affect your ability to drive or handle equipment during this time.

Do I have to continue my glaucoma eye drops?

Your Ophthalmologist may recommend reducing your usual glaucoma drops after the surgery. They will then be adjusted over the following weeks depending on the pressure control.

On discharge you will be given eye drops to use which are important to reduce the risk of inflammation and infection.

How successful is trabecular microsurgery?

Studies indicate that this surgery usually lowers the eye pressure by about 30%, while also decreasing the number of glaucoma eye drops that need to be taken. Trabecular microsurgery has not been compared in a formal randomized controlled trial to conventional glaucoma surgery (trabeculectomy).

Several studies have found success rates similar to conventional filtering surgery through one year post-op, but long-term success data is not yet available.

What if the pressure is not low enough after surgery?

Because trabecular microsurgery does not always work, glaucoma medications or additional glaucoma surgery may be needed. Fortunately, this surgery should not affect the success of subsequent conventional glaucoma surgeries if needed.

Emergency contact information

Eye Care Centre, Leighton Hospital

Telephone **01270 255141** and ask for **Ophthalmic Triage on Bleep 2080**. Available Monday to Friday between 9.00am and 4.30pm.

Out of these hours, please contact or attend your local Accident and Emergency Department if you feel you have an urgent problem.

This leaflet is available in audio, Braille, large print and other languages. To request a copy, please ask a member of staff.



**INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE**

