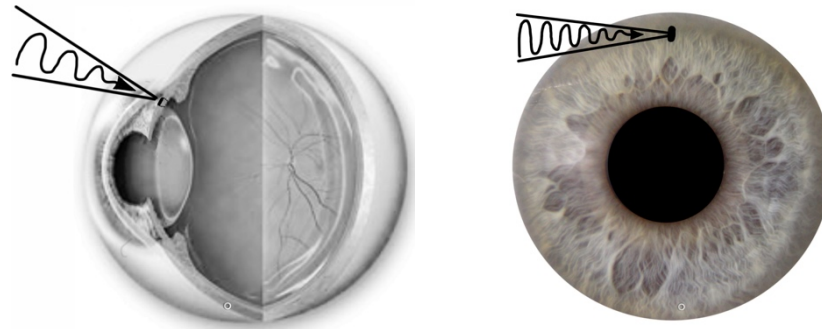


## Information for patients

### LASER IRIDOTOMY



#### **Why is the treatment being performed?**

This type of laser treatment is usually performed in an attempt to treat or prevent high pressure within the eye. The laser is used to make one or two small openings in the iris (the colour part of your eye) to provide alternative pathways for the flow of the liquid inside the front part of your eye.

#### **What are the benefits of treatment?**

The aims of treatment are either; to prevent a sudden rise in pressure in your eye (acute glaucoma) or, to try to reduce the pressure which is already high in your eye. The reason for treatment is that a high pressure can damage the nerve at the back of your eye and cause loss of vision.

#### **What the treatment involves:**

The treatment takes just a few minutes in the outpatient department. After your treatment there will be no visible sign on your eye that any procedure has taken place.

You will sit at a special laser slit-lamp very similar to the one which you will be familiar with from your eye examinations. Drops will be instilled into your eye to constrict your pupil and to numb the front of the eye, these usually cause a temporary headache that lasts for an hour or two. A special contact lens is placed on your eye to enable the surgeon to focus the laser on the correct part of your iris and will keep your eyelids open. A beam of red light is used to aim the treatment laser light, which is otherwise invisible. You will hear a series of “clicks” and “pops” each time the laser is fired. You may also be aware of a picking sensation in your eye when the laser is fired. After the

laser treatment your vision may be blurred for a short time. You will be prescribed drops to use for 1 week. They protect the eye against inflammation and prevent the openings created in your iris from sealing over.

**What are the serious or frequently occurring risks of the treatment?**

Although the treatment is safe and usually successful, complications do occasionally occur such as:

Bleeding within the eye

- this is not uncommon and is usually transient

Inflammation / Increased pressure in your eye

- may cause damage to the eye if undetected

Failure to make an adequate iris opening

- repeat laser may be required

Spots or lines of light in your vision

- the small openings created in the iris may allow extra light into your eye. This is nothing to worry about and most people are not unduly troubled.

Overall the risk of a complication is low and fortunately most are easily treated.