

# **PATIENT INFORMATION**

# **RETINAL LASER TREATMENT FOR RETINAL VEIN OCCLUSION**

Your ophthalmologist has identified that you require laser treatment for retinal vein occlusion. You have been put on a waiting list and will be sent for surely or you may be given a date today.

All your laser appointments will be at Southport Eye Clinic. This treatment usually requires three separate visits, for laser treatment

|    |     |      |      |
|----|-----|------|------|
| 1. | DAY | DATE | TIME |
| 2. | DAY | DATE | TIME |
| 3. | DAY | DATE | TIME |
|    |     |      |      |

**If you have any issues or problems keeping your appointment, please let us know and we will arrange another appointment. Please contact the ophthalmic reception on 01704705227 during the hours 08:30-17:00.**

### **What is retinal vein occlusion?**

The retinal is the light sensitive tissue lining the back of the eye that enables us to see.

Retinal vein occlusion is a common cause of sudden, painless reduction or loss of vision. It mainly occurs in

people over 65 (it is fairly uncommon in people under this age, but can occur.)

Retinal vein occlusion when a blood clot, blocks a vein within the eye. Blood enters the eye through the central retinal artery but cannot leave the eye as usual, through the retinal vein due to the clot. This in turn causes congestion within the retina and it cannot function properly. This congestion leads to swelling and leakage of fluid and the retina becomes starved of oxygen. Sometimes the retina realises it is in trouble and it produces new, abnormal blood vessels that leak and bleed easily. These new blood vessels can grow on iris and cause pressure within the eye to rise. This causes the eye to be painful.

There are two types of retinal vein occlusion.

### **Central retinal vein occlusion**

This is when a clot/blockage occurs in the main central retinal vein leaving the eye. Loss of vision is generally more severe if the central retinal vein is affected.

### **Branch retinal vein occlusion**

This is due to a blockage/clot in one of the four retinal veins (The central retinal vein branches off into four).

Retinal vein occlusion can be permanent. Some people respond well to treatment, but may still experience some reduction in vision. Your ophthalmologist will discuss your own individual diagnosis and planned treatment.

## Signs and symptoms

Onset of painless, loss or blurring of vision.

The visual symptoms can happen suddenly or gradually, worsening over several hours or days.

## Risk Factors

- Age – most retinal vein occlusions happen in over 65
- High blood pressure (hypertension)
- Diabetes
- Raised cholesterol
- Smoking
- Obesity
- Glaucoma or raised intraocular eye pressure
- Any other problems affecting blood flow. (blood clotting disorders)

## What is Retinal Laser?

Laser is highly focused light to treat problems at the back of the eye.

## Purpose of laser treatment

The main reason of the laser treatment is to prevent the pressure within the eye becoming raised. If the pressure is already raised the aim of the laser is to stabilize and control the pressure.

This in turn will make the eye more comfortable.

## HOSPITAL VISIT

The nurse will record your vision and instil eye drops to enlarge your pupil(s)-(dilate). The drops will take approximately 20 mins to work. You will need to sign a consent form, which you can discuss with doctor prior to treatment. **DO NOT DRIVE** for this attendance.

## TREATMENT

The laser looks like the instrument you have your eyes examined within the eye clinic. You will need to put your chin on the rest. Eye drops to numb the eye will be instilled prior to treatment. A small contact lens is used, this helps focus the laser and stops you from blinking. The length of treatment is approximately 15-20 minutes. This type of laser treatment can be pain free but some patients complain of discomfort please let the doctor know.

This outpatient procedure. Your stay will be approximately one hour to an hour and half.

## POST-TREATMENT

Immediately after your treatment your vision will be blurred, more than usual, because of the bright light and the drops. The vision should return to normal later on that day. If you should experience any headache, take your usual painkillers. No special precautions need to be taken following treatment. In some cases you may need to avoid exercise such as running. **DO NOT DRIVE** to your appointment or while your vision is blurred.

## **OUTCOME**

Your follow-up arrangements for the clinic will be made or posted on to you. This is when all your laser treatment is complete. It takes about 6-8 weeks for the effects of laser treatment to be seen. Meanwhile keep all your laser appointments as originally planned unless the doctor has altered your treatment plan.

## **ALTERNATIVES TO TREATMENT**

We currently have no alternatives to treatment at this hospital. Other hospitals may offer intra-ocular injections. Photodynamic therapy and cyclodiode laser treatment. The doctor can discuss this with you. If you have any concerns, pre or post treatment contact us Monday to Friday on (01704) 705217. (08:30-17:00) Please contact your local A&E Department out of hours

People to contact if any queries:

Sister Colette Bricklebank (01704 705217) or any members of the ophthalmic nursing team.

Additional sources of information.

[www.rnib.org.uk-retinalvesselocclusion](http://www.rnib.org.uk-retinalvesselocclusion)

# **NOTES**

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**During your contact with us, it is important that you are happy with your care and treatment. Please speak to a member of staff and/or the ward/department Sister/Charge Nurse if you have questions or concerns.**

## **MATRON**

A Matron is also available during the hours of 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday. During these periods, ward/department staff can contact Matron to arrange to meet with you. Out of hours, a Senior Nurse can be contacted via the ward/department to deal with any concerns you may have.

## **INFECTION CONTROL REQUEST**

Preventing infections is a crucial part of our patients' care. To ensure that our standards remain high our staff have regular infection prevention and control training and their practice is monitored in the workplace. We ask patients and visitors to assist us in preventing infections by cleaning their hands at regular intervals and informing staff of areas within the hospital that appear soiled.

As a patient there may be times that you are unsure whether a staff member has cleaned their hands; if in doubt please ask the staff member and they will be only too happy to put your mind at ease by cleaning their hands so that you can see them.

## **SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS**

### **ANY CONDITION SPECIFIC DANGER SIGNALS TO LOOK OUT FOR:**

### **CONTACT INFORMATION IF YOU ARE WORRIED ABOUT YOUR CONDITION**

- Your own GP

### **OTHER USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS/CONTACTS:**

NHS 111

Stop Smoking Helpline (Sefton) – 0300 100 1000

Stop Smoking Helpline (West Lancashire) – 0800 328 6297

**Please call 01704 704714 if you need  
this leaflet in an alternative format**

**Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust**

Ormskirk & District General Hospital  
Wigan Road, Ormskirk, L39 2AZ  
Tel: (01695) 577111

Southport & Formby District General Hospital  
Town Lane, Kew, Southport, PR8 6PN  
Tel: (01704) 547471

**FOR APPOINTMENTS**

Telephone (01695) 656680  
Email [soh-tr.appointments@nhs.net](mailto:soh-tr.appointments@nhs.net)

Please remember to complete the **attached Friends and Family Test**.

Alternatively, you can complete the *Friends and Family Test* on-line by going to:  
[southportandormskirk.nhs.uk/FFT](http://southportandormskirk.nhs.uk/FFT)

**Thank you**

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