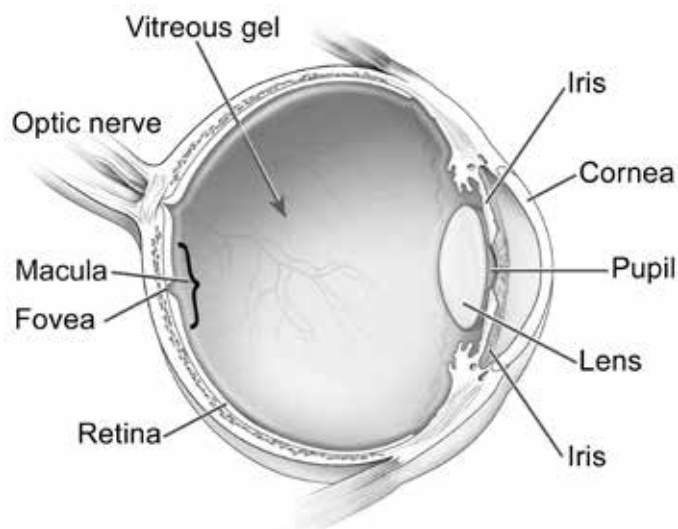


Pan retinal photocoagulation (PRP)

Why do I need PRP?

Due to the condition you have, your retina (the light sensitive layer at the back of your eye) has new, abnormal blood vessels growing on it. Unless we treat them they are likely to continue to grow and bleed. This would affect your vision and could cause severe, permanent eye damage as well as causing the eye to become painful. Laser therapy does not improve your vision. The aim is to prevent severe vision loss and reduce the pain in the eye.



What is PRP?

Pan retinal photocoagulation (PRP) involves using a laser to make small burns scattered evenly across your peripheral retina. This should make the new blood vessels shrink and disappear. You might need up to 3000 laser burns which can be applied in one session but two to three sessions are usually required. PRP has been used for many years and is the most effective treatment for this problem.

What happens during the treatment?

We will check your vision (please bring your distance glasses). We will give you eye drops to enlarge your pupil. The doctor will talk to you about the laser treatment and ask you to sign a consent form.

The machine used for the procedure is similar to the machine used during a regular eye exam. You will sit with your chin on the chinrest and your forehead against the headrest. You will be given topical eye drops to numb the front of your eye. You may still feel a mild ache and discomfort during the procedure. A contact lens will be placed on your cornea to allow the doctor to see to the back of the eye and prevent you from blinking.

The procedure can take up to 30 minutes where a laser beam is shone at the peripheral parts of the retina to produce a small, faint reaction that is repeated several times. You will see flashes of bright light during the procedure. Tell your provider if you feel significant discomfort as an option for stronger anaesthetic may be provided.

A nurse will be present, alongside the ophthalmologist, throughout the procedure.

What happens after the treatment?

Your vision will be a little blurry for the rest of the day. You will need someone to accompany you home after the treatment. You may wish to bring a pair of sunglasses as your eyes will be sensitive to bright lights. This effect wears off after a few hours, you may get a slight headache

during these first few hours. If so take your usual painkiller. If the pain continues for more than a few hours or if you experience marked drop in vision you can ring:

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What are the side effects of laser therapy?

This treatment may reduce your peripheral vision (the amount you can see out of the corner of your eyes), it can also affect your night vision and affect your ability to drive. The risk of vision loss from not receiving treatment is much higher than laser therapy. Sometimes laser therapy does not work and your vision can still get worse despite treatment. Further uncommon side effects include discomfort, glare, central vision loss, retinal detachment, choroidal detachment, macular decompensation and intraocular pressure problems.

Important facts for drivers

If you have a driving licence or plan to get one please discuss this with your laser surgeon. If you have had laser treatment you need to inform the DVLA. They will arrange to have your side vision (visual field) tested at your local optometrist before making a decision on whether you will be able to drive.

An important reminder

Please come to the hospital by bus or arrange for someone to take you home after your appointment. You should not drive nor operate machinery for the rest of the day.

We hope this leaflet has been helpful. If you have any comments about the leaflet or questions about the procedure please ask our staff.

The Trust cannot accept any responsibility for the accuracy of the information given if the leaflet is not used by RD&E staff undertaking procedures at the RD&E hospitals.

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