

YAG Laser Capsulotomy

The posterior capsule is the fine transparent membrane behind your natural lens which we leave in the eye to support the artificial lens implant during a cataract operation.

In about 1 in 10 patients, the transparent membrane becomes cloudy after cataract surgery, causing a gradual reduction in vision. This can occur months to years after surgery.

The purpose of laser treatment (capsulotomy) is to create an opening in the cloudy membrane in order to restore vision.

Before treatment

Consent

- Before agreeing to undergo laser treatment you will need to sign a consent form signifying that you understand the risks and benefits of the procedure.
- We encourage you to ask any questions which may arise before signing the consent form.
- We are happy to provide you with a copy of the consent for if you wish.

Making a referral:

Email: Info@Communityeyecare.org.uk

Tel: 01772 717167

Fax: 01772 795620

Community Eyecare, 6 Fulwood Park, Caxton Road, Preston, PR2 9NZ

Intended benefits of laser capsulotomy

- Improved eyesight

As with any procedure, laser treatment has risks:

- An improvement in eyesight cannot be guaranteed.
- Serious complications are however rare.

The main risks of laser capsulotomy are:

1. **Floater**s after the procedure are common and often settle within days. Occasionally these may persist and become permanent.
2. **Retinal detachment** – the retina, which is the inner lining of the eye, can become detached. If untreated, this can lead to reduced or complete loss of eyesight, but if detected early it can usually be successfully treated. This happens in 1 to 2 in 100 patients
3. **Macular oedema** – the retina can become swollen causing blurring of vision. This can be treated medically but may take several weeks to improve. The chance of macular oedema after laser capsulotomy is 1-2%, but may be higher in diabetic patients.
4. **Worsening of glaucoma** or causing glaucoma (raised pressure) in the eye. This usually can be medically treated and has an incidence of 1.5% after capsulotomy.

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5. Rarely the **lens may be damaged** by the laser causing visual problems. In exceptional circumstances, the lens may subsequently need to be changed.

6. Very rarely, additional medical or laser treatment may be needed after the procedure to obtain the best vision.

The procedure and what to expect

- Your vision will be checked, so please bring your distance glasses with you.
- Drops to dilate your pupil will be put into one or both eyes, which will blur your vision for several hours.
- You will not be able to drive home after the drops, so please bring a companion or make suitable transport arrangements
- The procedure is performed with the laser machine connected to a normal slit-lamp (microscope).
- Anaesthetic and sometimes pressure-lowering drops are put in.
- A contact lens is placed on the eye to focus the laser beam and keep the eye open.
- The procedure lasts approximately 5-10 minutes, during which time you will hear beeping noises and experience bright lights.
- There is minimal discomfort, if any.

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After your treatment

- Your vision will be blurred after the treatment, but should improve over the following few hours.
- You may notice floaters, but these tend to settle within the first 2 weeks.
- If you experience a sudden shower of floaters, flashes of light in the eye, or the feeling of a curtain coming over your vision, you should contact the Community Eyecare or visit your optician as this may indicate a retinal detachment.
- You should also contact the eye unit if you experience severe pain or loss of vision after the laser treatment.
- Certain patients will require follow-up appointments in the outpatient clinic. Before you leave, the laser operator will advise you whether another appointment is needed.
- You may resume driving the following day.
- You may visit the optician a week after the treatment to check the laser procedure and if your glasses need changing.

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