

## Patient Information - Trabeculectomy

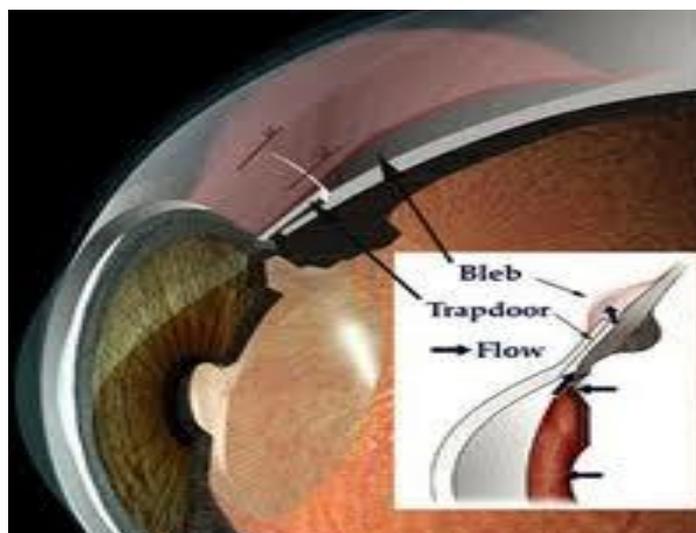
### Department of Ophthalmology

#### Introduction

You have been given this leaflet because your glaucoma may be progressing despite having the maximum medication that is deemed safe for you. If your glaucoma continues to progress, you are likely to lose more vision.

#### What is a Trabeculectomy?

This is an operation which aims to lower the pressure in your eye by creating a passage for the fluid in your eye to drain out through. An incision is made into the white part of your eye at the top, like a trap door, and a small hole is made into the coloured part of your eye (iris). The fluid drains out lifting up the loose cover (conjunctiva) on the white of the eye forming a bubble called a bleb. The fluid is absorbed by the conjunctiva and returns to the blood stream. It does not usually affect the general appearance of the eye.



Some people may have problems with scar formation particularly in younger patients, those of Afro-Caribbean origin or patients with eye conditions other than glaucoma. Therefore anti-scarring drugs may be used during the surgery.

There are two types of drugs that can be used. These substances are called anti-metabolites:

- **5 Fluorouracil (5FU)** - The 5FU drug is given at the time of the operation as an injection under the conjunctiva covering the escape valve, to prevent the formation of scar tissue. More injections may be required after surgery which will be completed as a day case procedure.
- **Mitomycin C (MMC)** - The MMC drug is only used at the time of surgery and further injections after surgery are not usually needed.

## What are the benefits?

80 to 85% of people have their eye pressure controlled without the need for further medication. The operation will not improve your vision but by controlling the pressure it should preserve the vision you have.

## How is the surgery performed?

- **Local Anaesthetic** – an injection is used to numb the eye so you will not feel the operation but you will be awake.
- **General Anaesthetic** – which means you will be asleep for the duration of the operation.

The method chosen will depend on your own preference, medical fitness and preference of your specialist. The operation takes about one hour and you are discharged home the same day.

## After surgery

You will go home with a dressing and shield over your eye which you keep on for the first night. If you have poor vision in the other eye you need to make arrangements for a friend or family member to stay with you for the first night.

The next day remove the dressing, keeping the shield to wear at night for the first two weeks.

Please ensure you wash your hands before and after putting drops in your operated eye as instructed. If a carer or friend puts the eye drops in for you, please ensure that they wash their hands before and afterwards.

You may need to return to the outpatients department the first day after your operation to have your pressure checked. If this is required then an appointment where possible will be given to you before your discharge home.

**Please keep all your follow-up appointments.**

### **You can**

- Read
- Cook
- Wear your glasses /sunglasses in the day
- Do light shopping and housework

### **Do not**

- Rub your eye
- Undertake strenuous exercise or swimming for six weeks
- Do heavy gardening
- Drive for the first week after your surgery. When you return to clinic you will have your vision assessed as being up to the legal requirements.

### **Complications**

- There is a small risk of bleeding in the eye at the time of surgery. This will gradually clear.
- The operation can be unpredictable and there may be a risk of over-drainage or under- drainage. This may need further treatment but usually settles.
- Cataract formation.

**If your eye becomes red, painful and/or there is a sticky discharge or further decrease in vision, you should contact the Urgent Eye Clinic:**

- Monday - Friday: 9am to 7pm.
- Saturday: 9am to 12:30pm.
- Closed from Saturday after 12:30pm until Monday at 9am.
- Closed Bank Holidays - please attend your local A&E department.

**Contact details:**

The Lister Treatment Centre  
Lister Hospital  
Coreys Mill Lane  
Stevenage  
Hertfordshire SG1 4AB

Telephone: 01438 288122 - Select Menu Option 3 or 4

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