



Laser iridoplasty

Information for patients from Ophthalmology

You have been diagnosed with narrow or closed angles in your eyes that need laser treatment. This leaflet will explain:

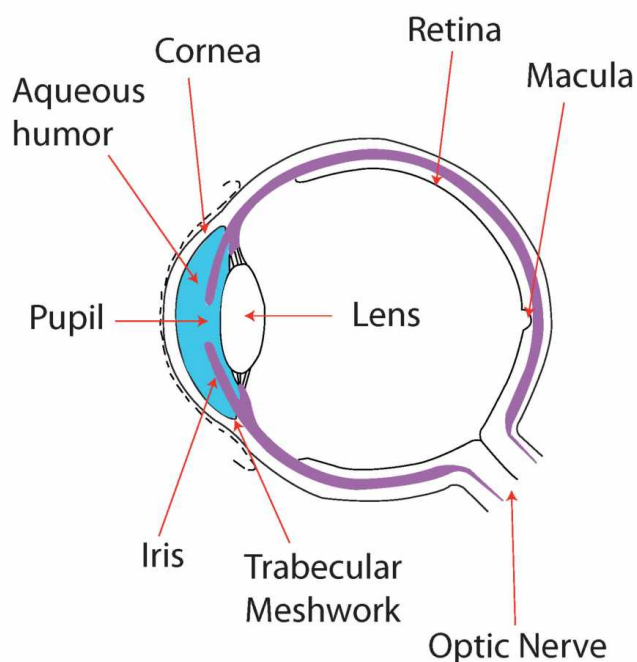
- what narrow and closed angles are
- what causes this to happen
- what your treatment options are
- what laser iridoplasty involves, and
- what to do if you have any concerns after treatment.

If you have any questions after reading this leaflet, please speak to a member of the team.

What are narrow or closed angles?

Narrow or closed angles is where the area between the edge of your iris and your cornea is too narrow. This can lead to angle closure glaucoma affecting your optic nerve. Your optic nerve carries images from your retina to your brain.

In some cases the normal fluid pressure within your eye (known as intraocular pressure or IOP) is too high, putting pressure on these nerve fibres. Untreated this may lead to loss of vision.



Parts of the eye

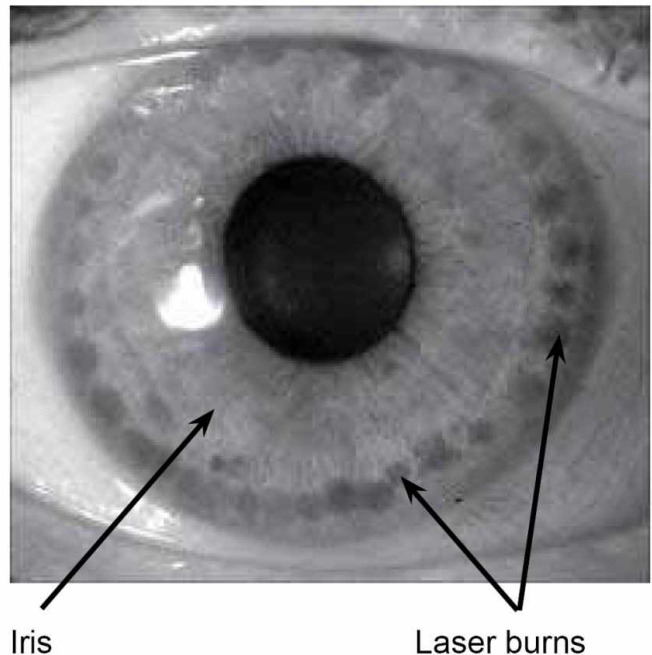
What can cause the pressure to increase?

The aqueous humor is the fluid within the eye. It helps to bathe and nourish the lens, iris, and cornea. It is produced by the tissues around the lens and drains out of the eye through a meshwork of tissues called the trabecular meshwork. The fluid then drains into the bloodstream.

The drainage angle in people with narrow or closed angles is too shallow, meaning that the fluid may not drain away as well. The drainage angle is the area where the edges of the cornea and iris meet. When the pupils get bigger, for example in dark conditions, the pressure in the eye can raise, leading to an episode of acute glaucoma.

What is laser iridoplasty?

Laser iridoplasty is a way of reducing the pressure in the eye, usually alongside treatment with eye drops. The laser concentrates on the edge of the iris. This shrinks the iris and makes more space to improve the drainage of fluid. The aim is to reduce eye pressure and prevent acute attacks of glaucoma.



Eye following laser iridoplasty, showing laser burns

Are there any other treatment options?

- Sometimes a laser treatment called **iridotomy** is done. This is where a hole is made in the iris to equalize the intraocular pressure in front and behind the pupil. For more information, please read to the Trust's Laser iridotomy ([/laser-iridotomy](#)) leaflet.
- Sometimes a **cataract operation** is needed to make more space inside the front of the eye. For more information, please read the Trust's One Stop Cataract Clinic ([/one-stop-cataract-clinic](#)) leaflet.

You can discuss these options with your eye doctor before any treatment is carried out.

How long will I have to stay in hospital?

This treatment is carried out in Outpatients as a day procedure. Allow 1 to 2 hours for your appointment. You will not need to stay in hospital overnight.

What happens when I arrive at the hospital?

Please refer to your appointment letter for where to come to when you arrive at the hospital. The receptionist will direct you to the clinic, where a member of clinic staff will call you.

What happens during the laser treatment?

You may have a sight test, so please bring your distance glasses with you. If you wear contact lenses, you will need to remove them for your appointment, so bring your distance glasses if you have them.

You will usually have drops put into your eye to make your pupil smaller. These drops take about 15 to 30 minutes to constrict (shrink) your pupil. You may also have drops to prevent a rise in pressure.

You will then have anaesthetic drops put in to numb your eye. The eye doctor (ophthalmologist) will place a special lens on the front of your eye. A beam of laser light will be directed at the edge of your iris, which may dazzle you.

Will the procedure hurt?

You may feel some discomfort during the treatment.

What happens after laser iridoplasty?

- The pupil constricting drops can give you **a headache**. Take your usual painkillers (such as paracetamol) if needed.
- The drops can also **affect your eyesight**. Some patients find their vision is temporarily more clear, whereas others find it more blurred. These effects should wear off within a few hours.

Will I need a follow-up appointment?

You will usually be seen again in the Eye Clinic at a later date to check your condition. Your doctor will tell you if you need this appointment before you leave hospital. If you do, they will give you a slip to take to reception to book the appointment.

When can I drive again?

Before you come to hospital, arrange for someone to collect you from hospital after your procedure and take you home. You can use public transport. **Do not drive yourself home or operate machinery after your laser treatment, as your vision may be affected for a few hours.**

How do I look after my eye at home?

You may be prescribed drops for about a week. Leave at least 5 to 10 minutes between different eye drop medicines.

What are the risks?

Usually there are no side effects.

- Rarely there can be a short period of **inflammation (swelling) of your iris**.
- There may be a rise in intraocular pressure or a corneal burn. This can cause **some pain and clouding of your vision**.
- Very rarely, **cataracts** (clouding of the eye lens) may develop after iridoplasty.

What should I do if my eye hurts at home?

Please contact your consultant's secretary, if you:

- have any concerns, or
- feel pain or have reduced vision for more than 24 hours after your laser treatment.

The secretary's phone number is on your appointment letter.

If necessary you can contact your GP, optician, or Emergency Department.

Further information

- Glaucoma UK (<https://glaucoma.uk/>)
- Kent Association for the Blind (KAB) (<https://www.kab.org.uk/>)
Telephone: 01227 763366
Email (kabdovercanterbury@kent.gov.uk)

References

- Ritch R, Liebmann JM. Argon Laser Peripheral Iridoplasty. *Ophthalmic Surgery and Lasers*; April 1996: 27 (4); 289-300. (<http://www.glaucoma.net/nygri/glaucoma/topics/ALPI.pdf>)
- The Royal College of Ophthalmologists (<https://www.rcophth.ac.uk/>)
- Vision and Eye Health: Glaucoma Laser Treatment (<https://www.vision-and-eye-health.com/glaucoma-laser/>)

This leaflet has been produced with and for patients.

Please let us know:

- If you have any accessibility needs; this includes needing a hearing loop or wanting someone to come with you to your appointment.
- If you need an interpreter.
- If you need this information in another format (such as Braille, audio, large print or Easy Read).

You can let us know this by:

- Visiting the Trust web site (<https://www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/ais>).
- Calling the number at the top of your appointment letter.
- Adding this information to the Patient Portal (<https://pp.ekhuft.nhs.uk/login>).
- Telling a member of staff at your next appointment.

Any complaints, comments, concerns or compliments, please speak to a member of your healthcare team. Or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service on 01227 783145 or email (ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net).

Patients should not bring large sums of money or valuables into hospital. Please note that East Kent Hospitals accepts no responsibility for the loss or damage to personal property, unless the property has been handed into Trust staff for safe-keeping.

Further patient information leaflets are available via the East Kent Hospitals' web site (<https://www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/patient-information>).

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