



Dr Geoffrey Ryan

Selective Laser Trabeculoplasty (SLT)



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Who is suitable for SLT treatment?

SLT is recommended for open angle glaucoma patients who require a reduction in intra-ocular pressure (IOP).

It can be used:

- As a first-line treatment instead of eye drops.
- A replacement for eye drops in patients who no longer want to take drops.
- In combination with eye drops to further lower IOP.

It is a flexible treatment option and can be repeated if necessary, depending on the individual patient's response.

How does SLT works?

SLT uses short pulses of relatively low-energy light to target the melanin-rich cells in the drainage channel of the eye. The laser pulses target the melanin containing cells, with the surrounding structures remaining unaffected. The treatment induces remodelling of the drainage system of the eye, resulting in a more efficient drainage pathway, lowering IOP. Overall, this procedure is well tolerated by patients, and is low risk.

Why should I choose SLT as a treatment option?

SLT effectively lowers raised IOP without the side effects or difficulty of taking eye drops. The treatment is particularly suitable for patients who cannot correctly use or are intolerant to glaucoma medications. It can also be used in conjunction with glaucoma eye drops to further lower IOP and reduce the need for surgery.

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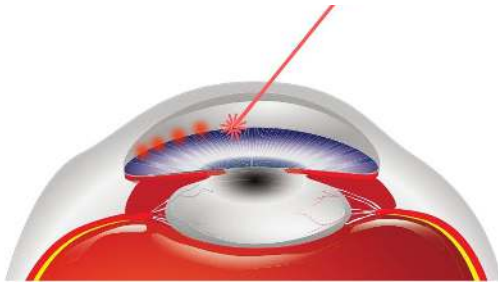
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What does the treatment involve?

Eye drops will be placed in your eye to prevent the pressure rising and to make your pupil smaller prior to the laser. These drops might cause a temporary headache. The laser is similar in appearance to the microscope Dr Ryan uses to examine your eye in clinic. Once seated in front of the laser you will have anaesthetic eye drops to numb the front surface of your eye. A special lens will then be placed against the front surface of your eye. This is not painful, but it might feel a little strange. During the laser treatment, you might see some flashes of light and hear clicking noises. The procedure takes between 5 and 10 minutes. An hour after your treatment, the pressure in your eye will be checked. If the pressure is within a safe range you then will be permitted to go home. A follow up appointment will be arranged.



During the procedure laser is applied to the drainage angle.

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What is the evidence that SLT works?

The LiGHT trial was a comprehensive study which compared SLT to eyedrops in 718 patients. It found 78.2% of patients who had SLT treatment maintained a target pressure at 36 months after treatment. This means that greater than three-quarters of SLT patients did not need eyedrops at the conclusion of the study. It also found that the SLT group had less deterioration in their glaucoma compared to the eye drop group. No patient from the SLT group required surgery, compared to 11 undergoing surgery from the eyedrop group.

What are the risks of SLT?

- Your vision will be blurred for a few hours following your laser treatment, but this will settle. The chance of your vision being permanently affected from SLT is extremely small. You are also advised not to drive yourself to the clinic, as you will be unable to drive home.
- The pressure in your eye may increase immediately after the treatment. This is often due to inflammation induced by the laser. To help prevent this you will receive a pressure lowering drop prior to the laser.
- Rarely, the pressure in the eye becomes significantly elevated and does not come down. If this happens, you may require further treatment with medication or surgery to lower the pressure. However, please be assured that this is a very unusual occurrence.

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Caring for your eye after SLT

Which drops do I use after laser?

You do not require any new drops following the laser. If you use glaucoma drops prior to the laser then Dr Ryan will advise whether to continue these.

When can I exercise?

There is no restriction in regards to exercise.

When can I drive?

You may drive the following day after laser treatment as long as you feel your vision is back to its normal baseline.

When can I return to work?

You may return to work the following day.

What happens if my eye becomes painful after the laser?

This may be a sign of inflammation or high pressure in the eye. It is advised to have your pressure measured by Dr Ryan or your local optometrist if you start to feel significant pain around the eye.

When should I be seen for follow-up?

An appointment will be made for 6-8 weeks following the laser. This gives time for the laser to take effect. If Dr Ryan classifies you as high risk based on the severity of your glaucoma, he may request an appointment sooner.

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