

Selective Laser Trabeculoplasty

This material will help you understand how your selective laser trabeculoplasty will help treat your open-angle glaucoma.

What is selective laser trabeculoplasty?

Selective laser trabeculoplasty is a type of laser treatment used to help your open angle glaucoma. One of the main problems in open-angle glaucoma is that the eye's drain does not work as well as in a normal eye. This leads to increased pressure inside the eye. This laser treatment helps the drain work better. The laser stimulates the cells that are responsible for clean-up work to "clean out" the eye's drain. It helps to lower eye pressure more than 75% of the time.

What can I expect on the day of my selective laser trabeculoplasty?

On the day of your procedure, you will come to the Kellogg Eye Center clinic. A technician will take a few measurements of your eyes and instill medications to prepare you for the laser. Your eye doctor will bring you back to the laser room.

You will sit at the laser slit lamp. (The laser slit lamp looks very similar to a regular slit lamp, like the ones you see in eye exam rooms.) Your eye doctor will make sure you are sitting in a comfortable position. Then, s/he will put numbing drops in your eye. S/he will use a special contact lens with gel on it to focus the laser energy onto the drain of the eye. The procedure will take 10-15 minutes.

Most patients do not have any pain. You will have your eye pressure checked one hour after the procedure. If the pressure is normal, you are free to go home. Your vision will be blurry after the procedure, but should clear up by the next morning.

Use the anti-inflammatory drops prescribed by your eye doctor to help your eye heal from the procedure. You do not have any restrictions on your activities. You will return to clinic for a check-up one week later.

During this visit, your doctor will make sure that your eye pressure has not increased. S/he will also make sure your inflammation has quieted down to ensure that you do not need to continue on any of your post-op medications. The laser takes about 6 weeks to work, so you will return for a six-week visit. On that visit, you will find out if the laser was effective in lowering your eye pressure.

Are there complications after having the selective laser trabeculoplasty?

With any surgery, there is a chance of a complication. Your doctor will go through all of the possible complications with you.

The main complication is that the laser does not work to lower eye pressure in all people. Also, the procedure can sometimes cause inflammation and increased eye pressure. If this occurs, your doctor will treat you with extra medications. If you experience eye pain or decreased vision after any procedure, call your doctor's office for an urgent appointment. If you call the clinic after clinic hours, you will be told how to get in touch with the eye doctor on call. There is an eye doctor on call every day of the year.

Disclaimer: This document contains information and/or instructional materials developed by the University of Michigan Health System (UMHS) for the typical patient with your condition. It may include links to online content that was not created by UMHS and for which UMHS does not assume responsibility. It does not replace medical advice from your health care provider because your experience may differ from that of the typical patient. Talk to your health care provider if you have any questions about this document, your condition or your treatment plan.

Author: Shayla Wilson, MPH candidate

Reviewers: Gale Oren, MILS and Paula Anne Newman-Casey, MD, MS

Patient Education by [University of Michigan Health System](#) is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported License](#). Last Revised 11/2014