

Ophthalmology Directorate

Steroid Eye Injection for Macular Disorders Information for Patients

As discussed at your appointment today, please call the Medical Retinal Services Coordinator as soon as possible (within 48 hours) to arrange your treatment plan. Treatment can be offered at Norwich or Cromer Hospitals or the Central Norwich Eye Clinic.

**Medical Retinal Coordinator: 01603 288311
Monday to Friday 08.30 – 16.30 hours**

Introduction

You have recently been diagnosed with a macular disorder.

- **Branch retinal vein occlusion**
- **Central retinal vein occlusion**
- **Diabetic macular oedema**

If left untreated, there is a high chance of your central vision becoming more blurred or distorted.

What does this mean?

The macula is the central part of the retina used for fine detail vision e.g. reading and recognising faces.

Retinal vein occlusion (branch/central) is caused by a blockage in the vein within the eye.

Macular oedema is swelling in the centre of the retina due to fluid leaking from damaged retinal blood vessels. This damage is commonly due to diabetes or retinal vein blockage (occlusion). This leads to blurring of the central vision.

Treatment is available and involves the injection of a steroid into the eye to prevent the retinal blood vessels from leaking.

This is a depot injection of a small dose and has no significant systemic side effects

Side effects of steroid injection in the eye include

Raised intraocular pressure

This occurs in 15 - 20% of people (and could lead to optic nerve damage if untreated) It is treated with eye drops or rarely (less than 1 in 1000) laser or surgery.

Increase in cataract

Which occurs in 30% within 1 year, and could require cataract surgery in a few (3%) people within 2 years

Floater are very common and will clear in 2 to 3 weeks.

Occasionally these are severe and cause marked blurring for around 6 weeks (in less than 1% of people)

Treatment Plan

One injection is given which usually lasts for 3 to 6 months.

Subsequently repeat injections are given when there are signs of recurrent disease activity – further blurring of vision, or leak detected in the macula when you are reviewed in the clinic.

You would normally be seen in the review clinic for a check-up at 4 to 6 weeks after the injection and then at 2 to 3 month intervals. At this visit you will have your pupils dilated. A retinal scan will be performed and the doctor will tell you if you need a further injection.

The Procedure

Treatment is carried out as an outpatient. There will be a nurse to look after you. Please DO NOT DRIVE yourself to this appointment. Please do not wear any eye makeup on the day of treatment.

Drops are put in to numb your eye. A drop of iodine cleans the surface of your eye. Your eyelids are held open by a springy clip and 0.05ml of the drug is injected through the white of your eye using a thin needle.

You will experience some blurring of your vision at first and people often notice dark floaters in the vision at first, which is the drug. This usually wears off within 2 weeks.

Complications

The risk to your eye from the injection is very small. Serious complications (problems) occur only once in every 2500 injections, and include:

- 1. A serious infection inside the eye (endophthalmitis), which can blind the eye. In this hospital this occurs approximately once in every 2500 injections.**
- 2. Damage to the retina causing a retinal detachment**
- 3. Damage to the lens causing a cataract**
- 4. Haemorrhage in the jelly of the eye (vitreous)**
- 5. Blockage of retinal circulation with damage to the optic nerve.**
- 6. Persistent floaters**
- 7. Increased distortion**
- 8. Corneal abrasion (scratch on the front surface of the eye). Rarely this can occur at the time of the injection. If this happens you will be advised about painkillers to use along with your eye-drops.**

The injection may cause a small haemorrhage (bruise) on the surface of the white of your eye, which will clear in a week or two. Your eye may feel a little sore for a couple of hours after the injection.

Surface irritation can make the eye water for 24-48 hours and may require painkillers.

What to do if you have problems after the injection

Phone for advice if you have:

- Increasing blurring, pain and red eye, which may be signs of infection**

- **Ark floaters or flashing bright light in your eye which occur newly after the treatment – possibly due to retinal detachment or haemorrhage. If you have any questions or worries, please contact:**

**Eye Clinic - 01603 288066 Monday - Thursday 08.45-17.30 hours
Friday 08.45-15.00 hours**

Central Norwich Eye Clinic - 01603 647101

At all other times please ring 01603 286286 and ask the switchboard to contact the Ophthalmic (Eye) Doctor on call.

Here are some contact telephone numbers for support agencies:

Norfolk and Norwich Association for the Blind: 01603 629558

**Norfolk County Council Social Services Sensory Support Unit:
01603 729221**

Norwich Social Centre for the Blind: 01603 621937

RNIB Helpline: 0303 123 9999

