

**INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS**

**ABOUT**

**INTRAVITREAL INJECTION AT  
THE PHOENIX UNIT**

**HARROGATE DISTRICT HOSPITAL**

Department of Ophthalmology  
Harrogate District Hospital  
Lancaster Park Road  
Harrogate HG2 7SX  
01423 885959  
Direct line: 01423 553423  
[www.hdft.nhs.uk](http://www.hdft.nhs.uk)

# The procedure

You should allow 2 hours for your clinic visit. On arrival, your vision will be checked by a nurse who may then administer eye drops which dilate your pupils. The dilating drops will cause your vision to be blurred and your eyes to be sensitive to light for a few hours so it is important to make arrangements for transport home after the procedure. These drops are sometimes needed to allow the nurse to perform imaging of the back of your eyes using an Optical Coherence Tomography (OCT) scan. This, along with examination of your eyes, will allow the healthcare professional to decide whether treatment or monitoring is indicated.

If treatment is deemed necessary, you will have an injection into the vitreous jelly in your eye. This is called an intravitreal injection. This injection needs to be given in a "clean room" to avoid infection. At our clinic doctors and specifically trained health care professionals give the injections.

Before the injection, you will be given anaesthetic eye drops to make your eye numb. The skin around your eye will be cleaned, the doctor will place a device to hold your eyelids open so you do not need to worry about blinking during the procedure. The procedure, including the preparation, usually takes 5 to 10 minutes.

The injection shouldn't usually be painful but you will feel a pressure sensation as you have the injection and the eye may be a little sore after the anaesthetic wears off. Because the injection goes into the gel in the centre of your eye there is a slight chance that the pressure inside your eye may rise a little. This shouldn't cause you any pain or change your vision, but you will need to be checked shortly after you have the injection.

The sight in the treated eye may be blurry because of the drop to dilate your pupil, but this should wear off within a day. Some people find that they have slight swirls in their vision for a few days following the injection. You may find that your eye waters a bit more following the injection and that your eye may be slightly red or irritated but this normally gets better after a few days.

## **What are the reasons for doing this?**

- **Age related Macular degeneration (AMD)**
- **Diabetic macular oedema,**
- **Retinal vein occlusions with macular oedema**
- **Other conditions**

## **What treatments are used?**

### **Lucentis and Eylea**

The most recent treatments available on the NHS for AMD are with anti vascular endothelial growth factor (anti VEGF) drugs, called Lucentis and Eylea. As new blood vessels form in your eye, your body produces a chemical which stimulates further new blood vessel growth. Anti VEGF drugs interfere with these chemicals and stop the vessels from growing. By stopping blood vessels growing and leaking, further damage to your sight is prevented.

Lucentis has been approved by NICE for treatment of diabetic macular oedema and macular oedema associated with retinal vein occlusions in certain circumstances. It works in these conditions by stopping leaking and preventing vision loss.

### **Avastin**

Avastin is used worldwide to treat eye diseases, however, it was not initially developed to treat eye conditions and it is not licensed

for this use. Most medication used to treat medical conditions in children is used off-licence like Avastin for eye conditions.

## What are the risks?

The main complications of this treatment are the chance of a rise in pressure in your eye, retinal detachment and eye infections which can be serious.

These only happen to a very small minority of people (less than 1 per cent of people having the treatment) and there are treatments available if any of these complications happen to you.

There **may** be a very small increased risk of heart problems or strokes, although this is not proven. If you have suffered from one of these in the past please inform the doctor or nurse.

If you are a woman of child-bearing age, you should take precautions to avoid pregnancy whilst you are receiving treatment with an anti VEGF drug as we are currently not aware of the effects this can have on pregnancy.

Please contact us urgently on **01423 542217 Triage service (mon- fri 9am-5pm) or 01423 553423 and press 3 to speak to the eye clinic clerk (mon- fri 8:30am-5pm)** or out of hours ask to speak to the on call Ophthalmologist via the hospital switchboard on 01423 885959 if you experience any of the following:

- Severe eye pain
- Reduced vision
- Severe red eye
- Increase in floaters or flashing lights

# What anaesthetic will be used?

Lots of anaesthetic eye drops

## Follow up

Usually you will need a course of injections. It is important that we see you regularly to check your eye and the progress of the treatment.

Usually anti VEGF treatments (Lucentis, Eylea, and Avastin) have a high success rate and, in most people, they stop sight getting worse. About 40 per cent of people also see an improvement in their vision.

## Other Help

- **Low vision aid clinics** are run by the hospital eye clinic. If you are finding reading or other activities difficult ask the Doctor/ Nurse about these clinics as there are magnifiers/ lights which can be purchased/ loaned which may help you.
- **Help for age related macular degeneration:**
  - There are **patient information leaflets** available explaining about Age Related Macular Degeneration. If you have not had one please ask the Doctor/ Nurse for one.
  - **Smoking** has been associated with an increased risk of Age Related Macular Degeneration. If you smoke, we would recommend that you stop.
  - **Vitamin supplements** may help protect your other eye. As these are not a medication they cannot be prescribed and you have to buy them over the counter at Chemists. There are lots on the market. Please ask the Doctor about these. If you are or were a recent smoker it is important that you get advice regarding which vitamin supplements to take as you need to avoid Beta carotene as this may increase your risk of lung cancer.
  - **Self monitoring.** If you have Dry Macular Degeneration in an eye, we recommend daily monitoring with either an

Amsler chart or by looking at something with straight lines such as blinds, bathroom tiles, window/ door frames. When testing an eye in this way it is important to close the other eye. If you notice a sudden increase in distortion/ wavy lines with your eye please contact us within the next day or so on the urgent number above. You may need further treatment.

## **If you need to change an appointment**

If you cannot make an appointment or need to change your appointment please call us on one of the following telephone numbers:

- Harrogate District Hospital IVT office 01423 557417

## **How to find us**

We are located at Harrogate District Hospital in the Phoenix Unit, Briary wing.

### **Address**

The Phoenix Unit, Briary wing  
Harrogate District Hospital NHS Foundation Trust  
Lancaster Park Road  
Harrogate  
North Yorkshire  
HG2 7SX

### **Arriving by bus**

For information regarding bus services please contact Harrogate and District Travel on 01423566061 or visit

[www.harrogateanddistrict.co.uk](http://www.harrogateanddistrict.co.uk)

## **Arriving by train**

For information regarding train services please contact your local station.

## **Parking**

There is a main patient car park for use during your appointment with a health care professional.

There is also free unrestricted on-street parking available on surrounding streets.

There is a drop off zone at the entrance to the Briary wing, but unfortunately you are unable to park here.

This information is available in other formats on request. Please ask your nursing staff to arrange this