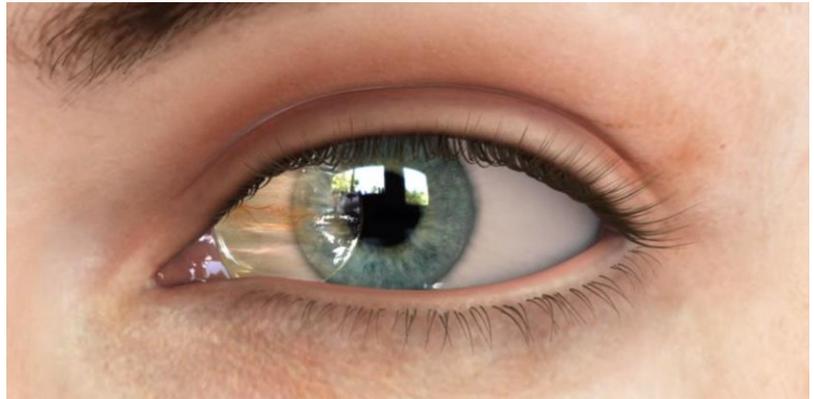


## Pterygium surgery

A pterygium occurs when the covering of the white part of the eye grows over the clear window at the front of the eye (the cornea). They occur more commonly in people from tropical regions who have had high UV exposure.



Along with looking unpleasant, pterygia can cause irritation and dryness. They can also interfere with vision by distorting the cornea which can throw the eye out of focus. This can also interfere with achieving a good result after cataract or lens surgery. A pterygium can also grow across the line of sight and leave permanent scarring.

Pterygium removal is a surgical procedure. This is done in a day surgery and does not require an overnight stay. The eye is made numb by an anaesthetist who will also give medication to make you relaxed. The procedure takes about 30-45 minutes. The pterygium is carefully peeled off. This leaves a raw area on the white part of the eye. This is covered by stitching in place a graft from the covering of the white part of the eye, generally from under the upper eyelid.

The eye is often quite irritable for a week after the procedure. The stitches will eventually dissolve. Drops will need to be used for a month after surgery. After a month the eye will begin to look normal.

As with any surgical procedures there are risks. However, with modern surgical techniques these risks are less than 1%. These risks include infection, recurrence of the pterygium, double vision, scarring.

Most people require a week off work. You should also not drive for the first few days after surgery. If you have any further questions please ask our staff.