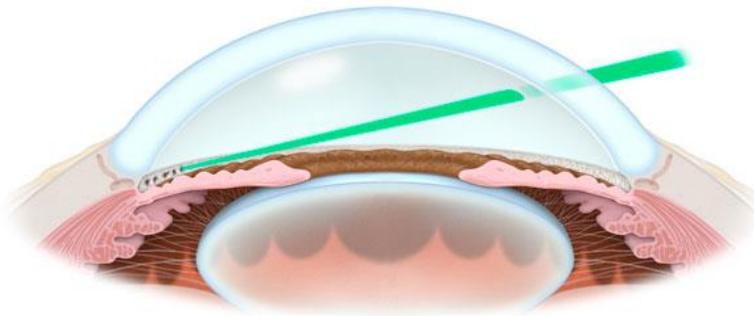


Selective laser trabeculoplasty (SLT)



SLT is a laser treatment which aims to **decrease the pressure inside the eye**. This is done when the pressure is too high in the eye and/or when there is pressure damage inside the eye (**glaucoma**). Lowering the pressure in the eye is done to **preserve vision and prevent blindness**. SLT will not improve vision and is very different to the laser treatment that is done to avoid wearing glasses.

The treatment makes the drainage channels in the eye more porous so that fluid drains out of the eye more easily, thus lowering the pressure (note that this is all inside the eye and does not relate to watering or dryness on the surface of the eye). SLT works only on the part of the eye where the fluid drains from. It can keep people off eyedrops and avoids many of the costs and side effects associated with eye drops (such as permanently dry, red, sore eyes). Sometimes SLT is needed in addition to eye drops to lower pressure.

SLT is successful in about 8 out of 10 people. It will be 1-2 months after the treatment until the full effect can be determined. Sometimes it is successful at lowering the pressure but the effect can wear off after a few years, in this case it can be repeated. The risks of any permanent damage to vision are very small (much less than 1 in 100). Risks include, but are not limited to, inflammation inside the eye, increased pressure inside the eye, and bleeding inside the eye.

The treatment occurs during a normal clinic visit. Usually 2 treatments are required for each eye (so if both eyes are being done there will be a total of 2 visits). The treatment takes 5-10 minutes. A numbing drop is placed on the eye. A lens is then placed on the eye and the treatment is done sitting up on a microscope just like the one that is used to look at the eye in clinic. There can be some discomfort during the procedure but it is generally not too bad and is over very quickly. A pressure lowering drop and an anti-inflammatory drop are placed in the eye. The eyes will be too blurry to drive for a couple of hours afterwards.

It is not uncommon for the eyes to ache for 1-2 days afterwards. Anti-inflammatory tablets such as ibuprofen (Nurofen) can be taken as needed for discomfort and inflammation (provided these tablets have been taken before without problems). If pain is severe, or there is prolonged pain or blurred vision then you should contact the clinic.