

Selective Laser Trabeculoplasty (SLT)

Procedure Code: C6111 – *Selective Laser Trabeculoplasty (SLT)*

Glaucoma can sometimes be treated successfully with medications to lower the pressure in the eye. If medications are not effective, laser and other surgical procedures could be of value in controlling the pressure and preventing further vision loss. Both medications and surgery are designed to produce two outcomes:

- Decrease the amount of fluid production in the eye from the cells that make the fluid
- Help the fluid flow out of the eye

Selective laser trabeculoplasty (SLT) is one option for lowering intraocular pressure (IOP) for patients who have open-angle glaucoma in the early stages. It can also be used in combination with drug therapy or as an alternative therapy when drugs fail. It is a flexible treatment option and can be repeated if necessary, depending on the individual patient's response.

How it works

The trabecular meshwork is around the periphery of the iris and is where fluid formed in the eye drains out of the eye. This meshwork is treated directly with the laser to improve drainage through it.

SLT uses short pulses of relatively low-energy light to target only the melanin rich cells in the drainage channel of the eye. The laser pulses affect only these melanin containing cells, with the surrounding structure remaining unaffected. This gentle laser treatment induces a response from the body in which white cells are released to clear the affected cells and rebuild the meshwork so that it functions effectively again, reducing the IOP.

SLT success rate

In a study of newly diagnosed patients who had not previously been treated with eye drops, 74% of patients remained free of the need to take eye drops after 3 years. In a separate study where most patients had previously been on glaucoma medication, success rates were 70% at six months and 45% at 12 months.

The effects of SLT treatment are not permanent but the treatment can be repeated.

During the procedure

- The procedure takes place in Mr Asaria's clinic room. You will be asked to sit in front of a standard eye examination slit lamp and place your chin on the chin rest.
- Mr Asaria will insert a contact lens to help improve the view of your eye and to prevent the eye from closing
- A bright white light will be shone into your eye to allow Mr Asaria to see where the treatment is being applied

- When activated the laser makes a soft beeping noise. The treatment is painless due to the anaesthetic drops used and most people will not experience any feeling in their eye

After the procedure

- You should not drive or operate machinery immediately after SLT Laser and should do so only when vision has returned to normal.
- You may be asked to wait 30 to 60 minutes in the waiting room so that your intraocular pressure can be measured again.
- Eye drops may be prescribed to use after the treatment as instructed by Mr Asaria.
- You should continue to use your normal glaucoma medication for both your eyes unless specifically told not to.
- A follow up appointment will be arranged for you.

Risks and side effects of SLT

SLT is a low-risk procedure. There is a small risk that you may experience an increase in eye pressure following the procedure. Your pressure may need to be checked and if needed, a short course of additional medication will be prescribed.

You may experience some mild blurring of vision, redness or an ache in the eye(s) for one to two days following laser treatment. If these symptoms are not settling or become concerning, you should contact us on 020 7432 8315 or info@londoneyecentres.co.uk

Inflammation can also occur, which can be treated with anti-inflammatory drops. A prescription for anti-inflammatory eye drops may be issued which can be used if you develop symptoms of inflammation.

There is a small risk of fluid leaking within or behind the retina and a risk of damage to the cornea. The risk of damage to your vision from either of these is extremely small.