



Patient & Family Guide  
2018

# Laser Iridotomy

Aussi disponible en français :  
*Iridotomie au laser (FF85-1945)*

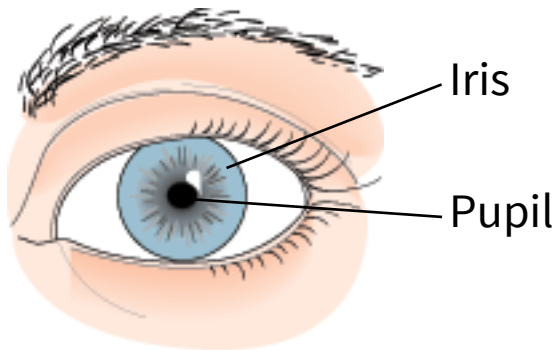


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# Laser Iridotomy

This procedure is to treat angle closure glaucoma (a specific type of glaucoma) or to prevent angle closure glaucoma from developing.

A laser is used to make a tiny hole in the coloured part of the eye (iris). This lets the fluid in the eye move more freely. Laser is an intense beam of light that can be precisely focused in the eye. It is safe and reliable because the laser light can be controlled so well.



# How do I get ready for the laser treatment?

- Take your drops and pills as usual.
- Bring all of your drops and medications, or a list of their names, with you to the Eye Care Centre.
- Eat your regular meals before coming to the Eye Care Centre, or bring a snack.
- We suggest that another person come with you to the Eye Care Centre and take you home.
- Register using a self check-in kiosk in the main entrance of the Centennial or Dickson Buildings, Victoria General site. Next, go to the Eye Care Centre in the Centennial Building, 2A.
- You will be given eye drops that may cause a mild headache across your eyebrow area. If you get a headache, take acetaminophen (Tylenol®).
- You may be at the Eye Care Centre for about 1 to 2 hours.

## How is the laser treatment done?

- You will be asked to sign a consent form.
- The treatment will take about 5 minutes.
- You will sit at a laser, similar to the microscope used in your eye doctor's office. The laser beam is controlled through the microscope.
- Freezing drops will be placed in your eye. This is to prevent discomfort from the special contact lens used to hold your eyelids apart and magnify (make bigger) the area being treated.
- Try to stay quiet and not move so the doctor can see your eye precisely to use the laser. You may see bright flashes of light during the laser treatment. Laser treatment is almost always painless. Rarely, a patient may have slight discomfort.

# What can I expect after the laser treatment?

- Your vision may be blurred right after the treatment.
- You may need to have your eye pressure rechecked later in the day.
- Continue taking all eye drops and medications as usual.
- Your doctor may also ask you to use anti-inflammatory eye drops (to prevent swelling) for a few days.
- You may do all your usual activities.

**What are your questions?**

**Please ask. We are here to help you.**

# What are the possible complications of this treatment?

- Laser iridotomy is a very safe procedure. Complications are rare.
- Laser iridotomy causes some inflammation which will make your eye red, irritated, and sensitive to light. Usually this inflammation goes away after a few days. Very rarely, if the inflammation continues, it can cause swelling in either the centre of vision (cystoid macular edema), or the front part of the eye (corneal edema).
- Rarely, laser iridotomy may cause increased eye pressure. This is treated with additional eye drops or oral medications (taken by mouth) and usually goes away over time. Very rarely, this increased pressure may continue and some patients may need surgery.
- Very rarely, laser iridotomy can cause bleeding in the eye. Usually it is treated with anti-inflammatory eye drops and goes away without any more problems.

- Extra visual images (haloes, bright lights or flashes, or double vision) may happen in the treated eye, but are rare. Almost all of the patients who develop this rare complication get used to it over time and are not bothered by it.
- In about one out of 4 patients, the angle may not open. Depending on the situation, some patients might need further laser treatment, other medical treatment, or surgery. Your ophthalmologist may suggest followup in one year.

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For more information, go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time: call 811 or visit <https://811.novascotia.ca>

Learn about other programs and services in your community: call 211 or visit <http://ns.211.ca>

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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.