

Laser Iridotomy

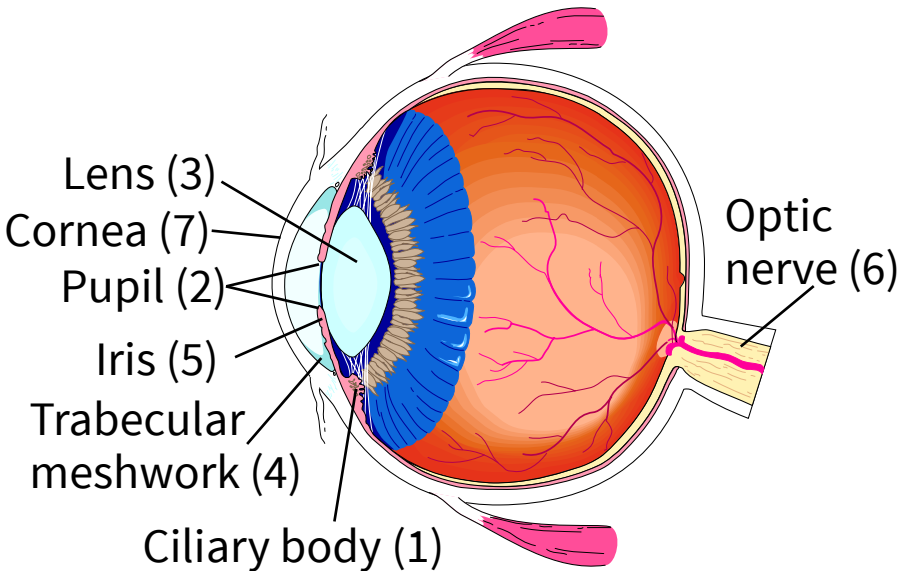
Register using a self check-in kiosk in the main entrance of the Centennial or the Dickson Building, Victoria General site.

Next, go to the Eye Care Centre in the Centennial Building, 2A.

Laser Iridotomy

Your health care provider has recommended laser iridotomy to prevent or treat your angle closure glaucoma (a specific type of glaucoma).

Your eyes are filled with a fluid made by the ciliary body (1). This fluid flows through the pupil (2), in front of the lens (3), and then out through a drain called the trabecular meshwork (4). The iris (5) is the coloured part of your eye.

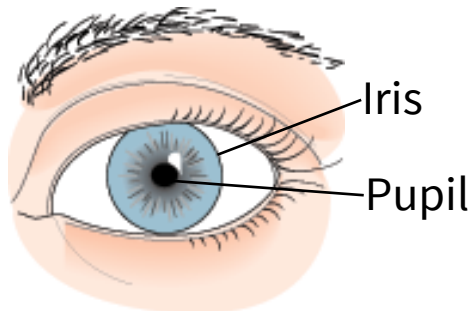


What is glaucoma?

Glaucoma is a disease where increased pressure in the eye damages the optic nerve (6 on page 1). It usually happens when trabecular meshwork (drain) does not work and fluid cannot drain from the eye. Fluid buildup in the front part of the eye increases pressure in your eye, damaging the optic nerve. This damage may at first cause loss of side vision. If left untreated, it may cause loss of central vision. Vision loss from glaucoma is irreversible (cannot be brought back).

What is laser iridotomy?

A laser (highly focused beam of light) is used to make a small hole in the coloured part of your eye (iris). This lets the fluid in your eye move more freely. This treatment is safe and reliable because the laser light can be controlled very well.



How do I get ready for the treatment?

- Eat your meals as usual before coming to the Eye Care Centre.
- Take your regular eye drops and medications as usual.
- Bring all of your eye drops and medications, or a list of their names, with you to the Centre.
- We suggest that someone come with you to the Eye Care Centre and take you home.
- You will get eye drops that may cause a headache across your eyebrow area. If you get a headache, you may take over the counter pain medication such as acetaminophen (Tylenol®) unless told otherwise by your health care provider.
- You may be at the Centre for about 1 to 2 hours.

How is the treatment done?

- You will be asked to sign a consent form.
- Freezing drops will be placed in your eye. This helps with discomfort from the special contact lens that will be placed on your eye. The lens holds your eyelids apart and magnifies (makes bigger) the area being treated.
- You will sit at the laser, which is similar to the microscope used in your eye doctor's office. The laser beam is controlled through the microscope.
- Try to stay still and quiet.
- Laser treatment is almost always painless, but you may have mild discomfort.
- The treatment takes about 5 minutes.

What will happen after the treatment?

- Keep taking **all** of your eye drops and medications as prescribed.
- Your eye doctor may prescribe new eye drops to help with irritation and inflammation (swelling) for a few days.
- Your vision may be blurred right after the treatment.
- You may need to have your eye pressure checked again later in the day.
- You may do all your usual activities.

What are the risks of this treatment?

- Laser iridotomy is very safe and complications are rare.
- Sometimes, the treatment may need to be repeated.

- Laser iridotomy always causes some inflammation. Your eye will be red, irritated, and sensitive to light. Usually this goes away after a few days. If it does not go away after a few days, call your eye doctor to check if you need anti-inflammatory drops. Very rarely, if the inflammation continues, it can cause swelling in the centre of your vision (cystoid macular edema) or in the front part of your eye (corneal edema).
- Rarely, laser iridotomy can cause the pressure in your eye to rise. This is treated with eye drops or oral (taken by mouth) medications and usually goes away over time. Very rarely, this rise in pressure may not go away and you may need surgery.
- Very rarely, laser iridotomy can cause bleeding in the eye during treatment. Usually this is treated with anti-inflammatory eye drops and goes away over time.

- Rarely, you may see extra visual images (such as halos around lights, bright lights or flashes, or double vision). Almost everyone who has this issue gets used to it over time. Sometimes these symptoms may need treatment.
- In about 1 out of 4 patients, the drainage angle may not open. In some cases you may need more laser treatment, other medical treatment, or surgery.
- Your ophthalmologist (eye specialist) may suggest a follow-up visit in 1 year.

Looking for more health information?

Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here: <https://library.nshealth.ca/PatientEducation>

Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.

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>

Nova Scotia Health Authority promotes a smoke-free, vape-free, and scent-free environment.

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www.nshealth.ca

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