



Intravitreal Injection

Your Questions Answered

Patient Information Leaflet

What is an Intravitreal Injection?

An intravitreal injection is an injection into the vitreous, which is the jelly like substance inside your eye.

Why is an intravitreal injection performed?

Intravitreal injections are used to deliver drugs to the retina and other structures in the back of the eye, thus avoiding effects on the rest of the body. Common conditions treated with intravitreal injections include;

- diabetic retinopathy
- macular degeneration
- retinal vascular diseases
- ocular inflammation.

What is the intravitreal injection procedure?

Firstly you will meet a nurse who will go through a checklist and check your blood pressure. Eye drops will be put into the affected eye to dilate your pupil. You will then meet the doctor who will discuss the procedure with you, giving you time to ask any questions you may have. You will be asked to sign a consent form.

The procedure takes five to ten minutes, but the injection itself takes no more than 20 seconds to perform. You will be lying back comfortably on a recliner chair. Anaesthetic drops will be instilled to numb your eye and minimise discomfort. Your eyelids will be cleaned with an antiseptic solution to prevent risk of infection to the eye. A small clasp will be used to keep the eye open during the injection. You will be asked to keep looking at a certain point or direction; at this stage it is important that you keep as still as possible. When the medication is injected you may feel a slight pressure sensation on the eye but this will only last for less than 20 seconds. Your vision will be assessed by counting the doctors fingers. Your eyelids will be cleaned again and antibiotic drops will be instilled. Afterwards you **may** be given a prescription and a follow up appointment will be arranged.

Consent

You may be asked to sign a consent form for a course of injections. This means you will be signing for usually three separate injections in between a period of 4-6 weeks. The doctor will explain why this is.

Who should not be treated?

You should not be given injections if you have any of the following conditions:

- Known allergy to the injection
- If you have any eye infection or feel unwell due to a current illness
- If you are trying to become pregnant, if you are already pregnant, or if you are breast-feeding.

Please inform staff if any of the above conditions relate to you

Are there any risks involved?

There is a risk of complications with intravitreal injections. These are rare and include, but are not limited to:

- Serious eye infection - one in 1,000 cases
- Bleeding inside the eye
- Reduction in vision
- Glaucoma (Increase pressure in the eye)
- Cataract (clouding of the lens)
- Retinal Detachment (separation of the layers at the back of the eye)

Significant loss of vision due to the injection is very uncommon.

What are the side effects?

Following the injection you **may** experience;

- Blurred vision temporarily
- Temporary discomfort in the eye which can be relieved by painkillers
- Black floaters which move in front of your eye, these will become smaller and disappear over 1 or 2 weeks

- A temporary rise in pressure within the eye which is managed by administering prescribed eye drops
- A small red area or haemorrhage at the site of injection is also commonly seen in the first few days after injection. It is similar to a bruise on the outside of your eye, and should resolve completely over 1-2 weeks.

Do I need to take any special care after the injection?

- You should avoid getting water in the eye, swimming or using eye make up for the one week after the injection.
- Avoid rubbing the eye
- There are no restrictions on watching TV, working on the computer or travelling after the injection.
- If eye drops are prescribed it is important to instil them as instructed.

Contact the hospital immediately if you experience increased pain, increasing redness, increasing sensitivity to light, discharge from the eye or a complete /sudden loss of vision in the eye.

What do I need to know?

- Please allow 2 - 4 hours for your appointment
- Please bring a list of your medications with you on the day of the procedure
- If you take warfarin please have your INR levels checked 2 - 3 days prior to your appointment if possible, and bring your INR result book with you.
- There is no need to fast prior to your appointment
- You should take your regular medications on the day of your appointment
- You cannot drive on the day of your injection as you will have received eye drops that will blur your vision
- Please arrange for your own transport to and from the hospital.

**If you have any concerns following your
treatment please contact the Royal Victoria
Eye and Ear Hospital**

**Day Care Unit
01 6644622
Between 8am and 5pm**

or

**Accident & Emergency Department
01 7088535**

Revision History

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PIL 022	1	October 2013	New Information Leaflet	n/a	Hospital Management Group