

PAN-RETINAL PHOTOCOAGULATION

Why do I need laser treatment (PRP)?

The light sensitive part of your eye (retina) has sensed a lack of oxygen as a result of diabetes and has begun to grow new blood vessels on its surface. These new blood vessels are fragile and can rupture and bleed resulting in sudden loss of vision and severe permanent damage.

What is PRP?

Pan-retinal photocoagulation involves using a laser to make small burns on your peripheral retina. This should make the new blood vessels shrink and disappear. This laser will not improve your vision but will reduce the risk of loss of vision.

What happens on the day of treatment?

Please do not drive to your appointment or for the rest of the day. We will check your vision and put drops in your eyes to enlarge your pupils. When you are seated in front of the laser machine you will be given more drops to numb the surface of your eyes and allow a contact lens to be held against your eye. This helps to focus the laser beam and will stop you from blinking during the treatment. You will see bright flashes of light in quick succession as the laser is applied. You may experience some discomfort during the laser treatment. The treatment will take 10-15 minutes.

What happens after treatment?

Your eyes will be temporarily dazzled by the laser light. You may develop a slight headache afterwards and if so take paracetamol or your usual painkiller. Please bring sunglasses to wear after the treatment, as you may be a little light sensitive. The laser treatment is usually performed over 2-4 sittings.

What happens if I do not have treatment?

The new blood vessels will continue to grow and cause severe bleeding, scarring, retinal detachment and irreversible loss of vision.

What are the side effects of treatment?

In the long-term, extensive peripheral retinal laser treatment may be accompanied by a decrease in night vision and/ or peripheral vision and affect your ability to drive. If you have a driving license or plan to get one and have had PRP laser to both eyes then you need to inform the DVLA. If you think you having more immediate problems related to the laser treatment please contact us.