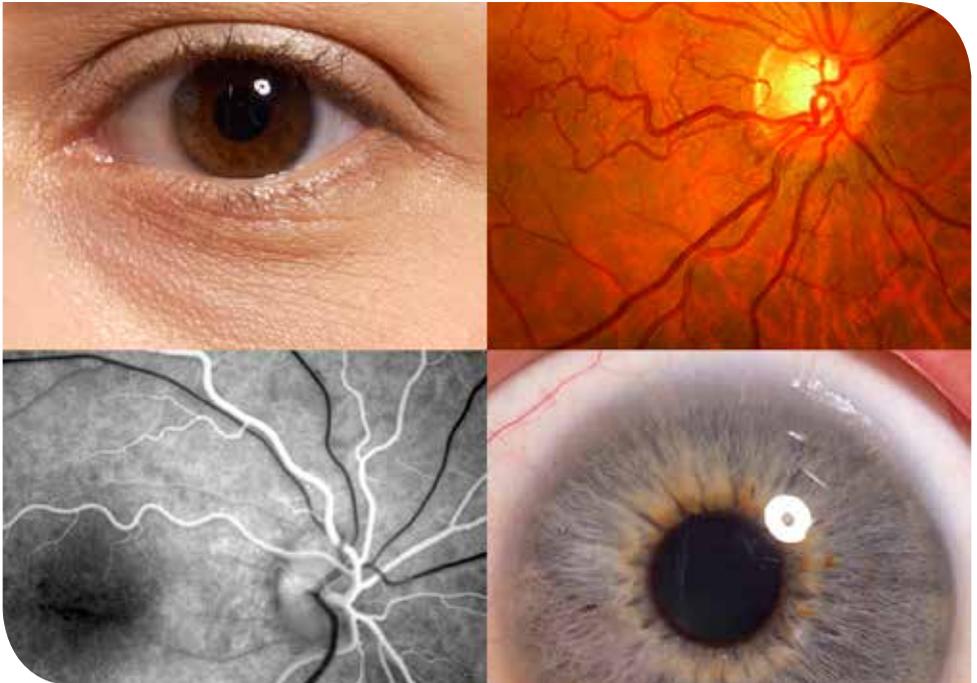


# Trabeculectomy

Eye Department



Patient information leaflet

## What is a Trabeculectomy?

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A 'trabeculectomy' is an operation to make the pressure lower inside the eye. Lower pressure helps slow down the progression of glaucoma and usually takes about 60 minutes.

## What anaesthetic is used?

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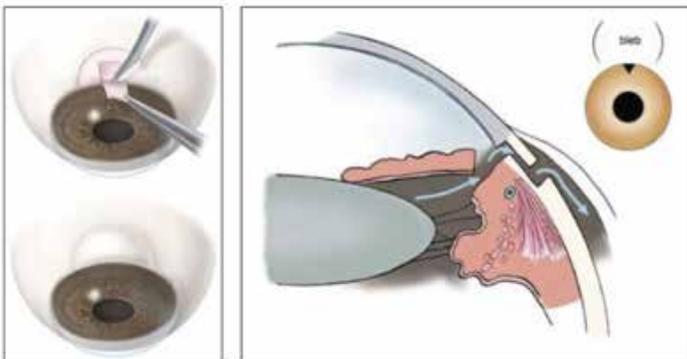
The operation is nearly always done as a day case under local anaesthetic. The local anaesthetic is given as an injection beside the eye. This makes the eye numb and usually blurred as well.

## What happens during a Trabeculectomy operation?

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The aim of the operation is to create a local swelling (bleb) on the upper part of the white of the eye. Fluid (aqueous) can drain from inside the eye to under the bleb, which lowers the pressure. At the end of the operation a pad is placed over the eye, which is left on until the following day.

In some cases, during the surgery, we treat the area around the Trabeculectomy with additional medication, to reduce the eye's natural tendency to heal too quickly and block the new channel. The medications we use for this include 5-fluorouracil (5-FU) and mitomycin.



## What happens after the operation?

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You will be seen the next day in outpatients for a check-up. There will be new drops (an antibiotic and steroid) to use in this eye for several weeks.

You need to stop using your previous glaucoma drops in the eye that has had the operation. If you were given Acetazolamide (“Diamox”) tablets to control your eye pressure leading up to surgery these must stop too please. In the long run some patients do need to restart these to get the pressure low enough but your doctor will guide you on this.

Please carry on with drops as usual in your other eye.

Most patients are then seen a week later, and again 2-3 weeks after that. The exact timing depends on how the eye is settling down.

The bleb is usually completely hidden under the top eyelid and most patients aren’t aware it is there after a few weeks.

## **What is the success rate of Trabeculectomy?**

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The operation helps lower the pressure in the eye in about 80% of cases.

## **What are the risks and complications of Trabeculectomy?**

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For most patients this operation achieves a lower pressure without any significant problems. All operations do have risks however and for Trabeculectomy these include:

- Reduced vision
- Increased likelihood of cataract
- Infection and loss of vision in the eye
- There is a long-term increased risk of infection getting inside the eye
- Further surgery is sometimes required to make the operation work properly, or to correct low pressure
- The surgery may cause a droopy eye lid

## **References**

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- Southampton eye clinic
- NICE Guidelines

## Contact details

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### Eye Department

**Telephone:** 01483 571122 **ext** 4498 / 4648 (Monday–Friday, 9am–5pm)

Or **01483 571122** and ask for the on call eye doctor.

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### PALS and Advocacy contact details

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Contact details of independent advocacy services can be provided by our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) who are located on the right hand side as you enter the main reception area. PALS are also your first point of contact for health related issues, questions or concerns surrounding RSCH patient services.

**Telephone:** 01483 402757

**Email:** [rsc-tr.pals@nhs.net](mailto:rsc-tr.pals@nhs.net)

**Opening hours:** 9.00am–3.00pm, Monday to Friday

If you would like information documents in large print, on tape or in another language or form please contact PALS.

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