

## **What is Macular Oedema?**

The macula is the central part of the retina which is responsible for our our fine detail and good vision.

Some people develop a build-up of fluid at the back of the eye (macular oedema) due to leaks of the blood vessels in the retina. This may be due to diabetes or a blockage in one of the veins (retinal vein occlusion).

## **Why do I need Macular Laser?**

The laser helps to dry up the leak in the macula area. If the leak is not treated it can result in irreversible damage to the central retina which can lead to blindness.

## **What are the risks?**

There is good evidence that macular laser treatment can prevent the vision from getting worse. The great proportion of patients maintain their vision or notice an improvement in their eyesight.

Macular laser like any retinal laser may have side effects including:

- You may notice blind spots in your central vision that may interfere with your sight
- Your colour vision might be altered.
- Some patients will need more than one laser treatment.
- Rarely your vision may deteriorate despite the treatment. This can occur if there is poor circulation at the back of the eye due to the underlying disease process or by an unintended burn to the centre of the macula.

## **How do I prepare for the laser treatment?**

- You may find it helpful to come to the procedure with a family member or friend. This is mainly because it is essential that you do not drive to and from the appointment.
- Please take all your normal medications prior to this treatment.
- You may eat and drink normally as you do not need to fast prior to the procedure.

## **What can I expect ?**

- Firstly your vision will be checked and you will receive dilating drops in the eye to undergo the retinal laser procedure. These drops are to allow the Ophthalmologist to effectively perform the laser treatment.
- A local anaesthetic drop or injection may be used before the laser treatment is given, this is to alleviate any pain associated following the treatment.

- the laser treatment is performed at a slit lamp - the same machine where you have had your eyes examined. A special contact lens is used that touches your eye , the laser procedure is then performed
- The laser makes a clicking noise and you may be aware of bright, flashing lights.
- The treatment usually takes 5-15 minutes depending on how much treatment is required in your particular circumstance. It is often done over a number of different sessions.
- You may notice discomfort or a dull ache in the eye after the treatment which will often be relieved with simple pain relief such as (Paracetamol).
- It is normal for your vision will be “dazzled” or may seem darker after the treatment. This effect may can last for 24-48 hours. It is not advisable to drive for up to 24 hours following treatment.