

# INTRAVITREAL INJECTION

## PROCEDURE INFORMATION SHEET

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### ABOUT THE PROCEDURE

An intravitreal injection is a procedure most commonly used to treat macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, and retinal vein occlusion. These sight stealing conditions respond well to intravitreal injections.

As intravitreal injections are used to treat several conditions of the eye, speak with your ophthalmologist if you require more information specific to your condition.



### WHAT TO EXPECT

Firstly, you may wish to know that the needle used for the injection is very thin. You will probably feel only pressure, with little or no pain, as the medicine is injected through the white part of your eye. You will be given anesthetic eye drops to numb the surface of your eye so the injection will be almost painless. Your lids will be held open with a

speculum and you'll be asked to look in a certain direction so that the medicine can be injected into a specific part of the eye.

### RETREATMENT

Your condition may require ongoing treatment. Intravitreal injections help manage conditions of the eye rather than provide a cure. Therefore, you may require multiple injections over time to help preserve your vision. If you stop taking the injections, any improvements you experience may stop and your vision will deteriorate to its previous state or worsen as your condition progresses. Injections for patients requiring ongoing treatment are typically scheduled monthly and you may also require follow-up appointments in between injections.

### ADVERSE EVENTS

Adverse events are rare, but the medications used for intravitreal injections do carry warnings. They may be linked to internal bleeding. These medications may cause slow healing of wounds, cause unhealed wounds to reopen, or irritate your stomach. Some patients are more at risk due to related health conditions.

### PATIENTS WITH RISK FACTORS FOR HEART ATTACK OR STROKE

We will carefully weigh the potential benefits of intravitreal injections for your condition if you have an increased risk of having a heart attack or myocardial infarction (MI) or have a previous history of MI. Studies have shown that a small number of patients already at risk of a MI

or have had a MI in the past, may experience a MI in the weeks after receiving an intravitreal injection. The exact relationship has not yet been determined.

## HOW LONG TO ALLOW FOR YOUR VISIT?

We ask that you allow approximately **1 hour** for your visit for an intravitreal injection. This may include pre-treatment diagnostic testing, the administration of eye drops and discussion with your ophthalmologists, and time for the procedure itself. You may be asked to wait for some time after your injection to ensure you are feeling well before you leave the clinic.

## TEMPORARY SIDE EFFECTS

**SPOT OF BLOOD** You may have some irritation or a spot of blood on the eye where the injection was given. This is normal and usually clears up in a week.

**INCREASED EYE PRESSURE** If you experience a headache or pressure in your eyes, you may wish to remain in the office until subsides. Your eye pressure may temporarily increase as the medication is absorbed. It will usually subside in less than 30 minutes.

**GREYNESS** You may see an overall grayness in your vision after the injection. This is the medication moving to the front of the eye, it will absorb over the next 30 minutes or so.

**BLACK SPOTS** You may or may not see black spots in your vision after the injection. These are air bubbles created by the medication and they should only last a few hours.

**FOREIGN BODY SENSATION** You may feel a sensation that something is in your eye. This is most likely a reaction to the povidone-iodine used to clean your eye. You can use artificial tears to relieve any discomfort.

## RESTRICTIONS

You may resume your normal activities after receiving an injection unless otherwise cautioned by your ophthalmologist. You may be asked to use anti-inflammatory eye drops for a week after the procedure.

## WHEN TO SEEK CARE

If you have any of the following ocular symptoms, **call us immediately** or proceed to the nearest outpatients to be assessed by the ophthalmologist on call:

Pain or Discomfort / Redness  
Decreased Vision / Discharge  
Increase of Floaters / Sensitivity to Light

If you experience symptoms that would indicate internal bleeding including from the mouth, gums, nose, or any other orifice, please contact your family doctor to be seen right away or go to outpatients.

**If you experience symptoms that would indicate you are experiencing a heart attack or stroke, call 911 and go directly to the nearest emergency room.**