

Eye Specialists

Informed consent for Laser Iridotomy

You have narrow angles. The angle is the space between the clear cornea and colored iris in the front of the eye. The angle contains an internal drain that controls eye pressure. Eye pressure goes up if the angle is so narrow or crowded that it closes up. This can happen quickly or slowly. The rise in pressure can damage the optic nerve, which connects the eye to the brain. It can cause glaucoma and permanent loss of vision.

Your ophthalmologist (eye surgeon) recommends laser iridotomy surgery. The ophthalmologist uses a laser to create a small hole in your iris. This hole will release fluid from behind your iris. Your iris can then move away from the cornea, and your angle will open.

Benefits (how this surgery can help). The goal of laser iridotomy is to lower your eye pressure and help you keep the vision you have now. It will not bring back vision you have already lost from glaucoma. It will not cure glaucoma. The surgery may lower your eye pressure enough that you don't need to take more medications or have more surgery. But you may need to keep taking your glaucoma medications. If you have narrow angles but don't have glaucoma yet, the surgery may permanently open your angles. This reduces the risk of getting glaucoma.

Alternatives (options and choices).

- Iridotomy using a surgical instrument instead of a laser to cut the iris. This surgery is done in the operating room. This way of opening the angle can cause an infection.
- No treatment for your narrow angles. If you don't get treatment, the eye pressure can rise and damage your optic nerve. You could lose all vision. You could also have severe pain.

Risks (problems the surgery can cause). Like all surgeries, there are risks with laser iridotomy. Your ophthalmologist cannot tell you all the risks. Here are some of the most common and serious ones:

- High eye pressure
- Corneal abrasion
- Inflammation
- Glare, halos, ghost images, blurry vision, light sensitivity, or other visual disturbances which may be permanent

- Change in pupil size or shape, which may be permanent
- Loss of vision
- Bleeding in the eye
- Need for additional surgery
- Pain, irritation, or discomfort in the eye or surrounding tissues that may last
- Problems during surgery that need immediate treatment. Your surgeon may need to do more surgery right away or change your surgery to treat this new problem.
- Other risks. There is no guarantee that the surgery will improve your vision. The surgery might make your vision worse, cause blindness, or even the loss of the eye. These problems can appear weeks, months, or even years after surgery.
- Careful follow-up is required after surgery. After your eye heals, you will still need regular eye exams to monitor your glaucoma and watch for other eye problems.

Laser iridotomy is performed under topical anesthesia, which means that eye drops are used to numb the eye. You must be able to cooperate with the surgeon to make sure you do not move your eye during surgery. Risks of topical anesthesia include injury to the eye by movement during surgery, drooping of the eyelid, and increased sensation during the surgery.

By signing below, you consent (agree) that:

- You read this informed consent form or had it read to you.
- You were told you have narrow angles.
- Your questions about the surgery were answered.
- You consent to have the ophthalmologist perform laser iridotomy on your _____ (“right,” “left”) eye.

Patient (or person authorized to sign for patient)

Date