

Plaza Del Rio Eye Clinic, P.C.

Laser for Glaucoma

SELECTIVE LASER TRABECULOPLASTY (SLT)

Glaucoma can sometimes be treated successfully with medications to lower the pressure in the eye. If medications are not effective, laser and other surgical procedures may be of value in controlling the pressure and preventing further vision loss. Both medications and surgery are designed to do one of two things: 1) decrease the amount of fluid production in the eye from the cells that make the fluid, or 2) help the fluid flow out of the eye.

This is a laser surgery used for people with open-angle glaucoma. The laser is used to make a small burn on the drainage tissue of the eye. Hopefully, the laser burn will cause the drain to open and let more fluid, of the eye, out.

There are some individuals who respond well to this and others who do not respond at all to the therapy. Your response is determined by the type of glaucoma you have and the basic makeup of your eye. We usually cannot predict how well the laser will work.

The procedure can be done in one or two trips to the laser area. The laser machine looks similar to the examination microscope that the doctor uses at each visit to look at your eyes. The laser itself makes little noise and flashes a light about as bright as a flash on a camera. Almost everybody finds the procedure comfortable and without pain. The procedure takes about ten minutes.

You may need drops before and after the laser. Most people need to have their pressure checked the day after the laser. This is because the pressure in the eye can go up after the laser treatment. This is the greatest risk from this procedure. If the pressure does go up, you may require medications to lower the pressure, which will be administered in the office. Rarely, the pressure in the eye elevates to a very high pressure and does not come down. If this happens, you may require surgery in the operating room to lower the pressure. This is a most unusual event.

Most people notice some blurring in their vision after the laser. This clears within a few hours in most individuals. The chance of your vision being permanently affected from this laser is very, very small.

In most cases, *you are asked to continue your other glaucoma medications after the laser procedure.* The doctor will notify you if there is any exception to continuing your medications. How much your pressure drops requires several weeks to determine. You may require additional laser surgery to lower the pressure if it is not sufficiently lower after the first laser treatment.