

Laser (YAG) capsulotomy

Why do I need this? Has my cataract grown back?

After cataract surgery, the back membrane of the cataract is left in place to support the lens implant. This membrane becomes cloudy and causes blurred vision, and sometimes patients will see streaks or haloes around lights. These problems worsen with time. This is called **posterior capsular opacification**. It does not mean that the cataract has grown back, just that microscopic lens cells have proliferated and created a cloudy membrane.

Sometimes it happens within months, sometimes it can take years. It depends on your eye and other factors such as lens implant type.

What is the treatment?

A painless YAG laser treatment can be done to fix posterior capsular opacification by creating a clear aperture in the membrane. This is performed in Dr Adams' rooms. The treatment takes around 10 minutes. Dr Adams may instil numbing eye drops into your eye so she can use a special lens to focus the laser and to help keep your eye open.

What are the risks?

It is a safe procedure, but laser surgery is still surgery. Complications can occur, although uncommonly. Some new floaters or spots may be seen. Retinal swelling or detachment can follow this type of surgery as well. The intra-ocular lens can become displaced. The eye pressure may rise temporarily after the YAG laser treatment.

Do I need time off? Can I exercise?

There is no interruption in physical activities (e.g. exercise) and no patch after the laser treatment is needed. Your pupil may be dilated so you should not drive for a few hours afterwards. You may prefer not to work for a few hours if your job has visual demands, until the dilated pupil returns to a normal size.

Do I need to use any drops afterwards? What about other medications?

You will need to use anti-inflammatory drops for five days after the laser to help the eye heal correctly. In most cases you will be asked to continue your other eye medications (if applicable) and all other medications as usual after the laser surgery. Dr Adams will notify you if there are exceptions to this.

What do I need to look out for afterwards?

Your vision should improve later that day when the pupil reduces in size.

If you experience reduction in vision, excessive new floaters or a dark patch in your visual field, or pain, contact Dr Adams at **Insight Eye Surgery** on **07 3154 1515** (Brisbane) or **07 5345 5011** (Noosa) in business hours or attend your local hospital emergency department after hours.