

Selective Laser Trabeculoplasty (SLT)

What is it?

SLT is a laser procedure used to treat glaucoma and reduce eye (intraocular) pressure by improving fluid outflow through drainage pores located within the trabecular mesh work.

How does it work?

SLT uses short pulses of low-energy light to improve drainage of aqueous fluid in order to lower eye pressure. In suitable patients it may be used to try and lower the eye pressure without the need for ongoing drops, or as a supplement to existing medications. The aim of the laser treatment is to lower the eye pressure to prevent further visual loss- it does not improve vision.

Who is it suitable for?

Dr Adams may recommend SLT:

- As initial treatment
- If your eye pressure is not adequately controlled with current medication(s)
- If your glaucoma is worsening
- If you are experiencing problems with your glaucoma medication(s)

What are the benefits?

SLT is considered a safe and effective procedure with few risks. SLT lowers the eye pressure by an average of 25% in 74%-85% of patients treated. The duration of the effect of the laser is variable, on average 3-4 years. SLT may be repeated. For those who do not respond to SLT, Dr Adams will discuss alternative treatment options. It may be necessary to supplement SLT with ongoing glaucoma medication.

Before the procedure

Take all medication as normal. SLT is performed under local anaesthetic drops. The procedure takes less than 15 minutes and is performed in Dr Adams' rooms. Dr Adams may place drops in the eye to constrict the pupil before the treatment.

During the procedure

A contact lens is placed on the eye to precisely focus the laser. The laser is applied to the drainage areas of the eye. You may see a bright red light and you may feel a mild tingling sensation with each eye laser shot.



Selective Laser Trabeculoplasty (SLT) *continued*

The laser does not structurally damage or “burn holes” in the eye; rather it works by causing release of local body chemicals that alter the ‘leakiness’ of the drainage pores, allowing more fluid out of the eye through natural pathways.

After the procedure

After the procedure you may resume normal activities but you should have someone drive you home. Vision may be slightly blurred for a day or so but often is not affected. It is common to have a gritty sensation in the eye for 2-3 days which should resolve. Continue your usual glaucoma medication after the procedure and take the anti-inflammatory medication provided – Maxidex four times a day for 5 days to the eye that had laser.

It may take 4 to 12 weeks for the full effect of the treatment. Dr Adams will usually ask for you to book your next appointment 8 weeks following the treatment.

What are the risks?

SLT is a safe procedure and complications are rare; loss of vision or significant inflammation after SLT is very rare indeed. The main risks of the laser procedure are:

The pressure may rise after the treatment, sometimes requiring additional treatment.

A second procedure or another type of surgery may be required.

You may experience transient red, uncomfortable eyes or blurred vision that may last a few days.

If you have any significant problems such as severe pain, decreasing vision or worsening discomfort or swelling around the eye, 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.