

## Useful Information

Your nurse today was.....

Your next appointment is..... at .....  
on the .....

Any queries regarding your appointment ring:

01744 646 130 / 646 131

Please bring your spectacles to clinic.

## Other useful organisations

<http://www.patient.co.uk/>

<http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk/index.asp>

<http://www.patientsupport.org.uk/>

### Sanderson Suite

01744 646 089/646 098

Whiston Hospital  
Warrington Road,  
Prescot, Merseyside, L35 5DR  
Telephone: 0151 426 1600

St Helens Hospital  
Marshall Cross Road,  
St Helens, Merseyside, WA9 3DA  
Telephone: 01744 26633

 /sthknhs  @sthk.nhs  
[www.sthk.nhs.uk](http://www.sthk.nhs.uk)

# Vitrectomy Surgery Patient Information Leaflet

This leaflet can be made available  
in alternative languages / formats on request.

如有需要，本传单可提供其他语言/版式  
此單張的其他語言/格式版本可按要求提供

Na żądanie ta ulotka może zostać udostępniona  
w innych językach/formatach.

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## Why is a Vitrectomy necessary?

The general indications for a Vitrectomy are:

- Retinal detachment
- Macular hole
- Diabetic vitreous haemorrhage (bleeding)
- Removal of intraocular foreign body
- Removal of membranes (scar tissue) from the retina
- Endophthalmitis (a serious eye infection)
- Complicated cataract surgery where there are residual lens fragments that need retrieving

## How is the Vitreous Jelly removed?

You may have the operation under a general anaesthetic (while you are asleep) or a local anaesthetic (while you are awake). Your doctor will discuss this with you.

The surgeon makes three very small cuts through the sclera (the white of your eye). Instruments are passed through these cuts, including a tiny light source, a cutting device and an infusion port. The cutting device cuts through and removes the vitreous while the infusion port replaces fluid in the eye to maintain the pressure within the eye during the procedure.

Once the jelly is removed the retina is repaired if necessary, foreign bodies are removed and in the case of a membrane this is peeled. In diabetic eye problems, any leaking blood vessels are sealed and retinal laser treatment is performed if required.

The procedure normally takes 1-2 hours.

## Things to avoid

### Avoid:

- Heavy lifting (this includes heavy shopping bags)
- Extreme physical exertion including contact sports
- Avoid rubbing or touching the eye with used handkerchiefs or tissues
- You may shower, but do not look directly up
- Avoid getting shampoo or soap in the operated eye
- Avoid swimming for at least 2 weeks
- Avoid driving unless you have checked with your surgeon that it is ok to do so.

## If you have any severe pain in the eye or sudden loss of vision, please contact:

The Eye Clinic 01744 646 136 / 0144 646 137

Monday-Friday 9am-5pm

Or

Outside these hours or bank holidays 0151 426 1600

And ask to be put in contact with the on call Ophthalmologist.

## Post Operative Advice

If you have been advised to adopt your head in a certain position (posturing). You will start straight after your operation

**Posture Position Is:**.....

**Timeframe Is:**.....

You may carry on with normal activities including watching TV, reading etc.

You will not strain your eye.

Wear dark glasses for comfort (if required).

Be careful not to poke yourself in the eye when putting on glasses.

Your face may feel numb, you may have blurred and/or double vision and your eye may water - this is normal and will soon wear off.

You may also get a gritty feeling and some discomfort is expected and you can take your normal painkillers such as paracetamol.

Please follow the instructions on the label.

You must wear the plastic shield at night for one week.

This can be washed with soap and water and put it back on with sticky tape.

## Does The Vitreous Jelly Get Replaced Naturally?

**No**, the jelly does not naturally replace itself and a number of substitutes may be used at the end of the surgery. These include:

- Gas bubble (which is absorbed naturally within 1-6 weeks)
- Transparent oil (which is not absorbed but is usually surgically removed at a later date)
- Air (absorbed naturally within 1-7 days)

The eye produces its own clear fluid known as aqueous humour that, as the gas or air is absorbed, will gradually fill the vitreous chamber.

It is important that **you do not fly** whilst you have air or gas in the eye, as the reduced atmospheric pressure in the air-craft may cause the bubble to expand, leading to a dangerous rise in your eye pressure.

## What Are The Risks During Surgery?

The procedure has a good success rate and complications are unusual.

However, minor complications may occur and in most cases these are treated effectively.

Possible complications during the operation are:

- Bleeding inside the eye.
- More holes occurring in the retina.
- Retinal detachment.

## Complications

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- More holes occurring in the retina.
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Most patients who have vitrectomy will develop a cataract (cloudiness of the lens of the eye) at an earlier age than they would otherwise. This is due to metabolic changes in the lens. If a cataract is already present cataract surgery is performed at the same time as the vitrectomy. Otherwise cataract surgery is performed if the cataract becomes significant at a later date.

## What Are The Possible Complications Following Vitrectomy Surgery?

- Bruising and swelling of the eye and eyelids
- High pressure inside the eye
- Inflammation inside the eye
- Cataract
- Double vision
- Allergic reaction to the medication
- Infection in the eye known as endophthalmitis. This is very rare but can lead to a serious loss of sight
- Inflammation around the implants used
- Retinal detachment
- Failure of surgery

Your doctor will discuss these with you prior to your operation and you giving your consent.

## What To Expect After Your Vitrectomy

The most important factor determining your rate of recovery and the final outcome is the pre-operative condition for which the vitrectomy was performed.

Your consultant can advise you what to expect. Another important factor is your ability to comply with post-operative instructions/recommendations.

- Expect your vision to be blurred for several weeks after surgery
- Expect your eye to be sensitive, swollen and red due to the nature of the surgery
- You will be prescribed a combination of eye drops to put in on your discharge home. These will help to prevent infection, reduce inflammation and rest the eye following surgery
- If gas or oil has been inserted into your eye, you will be advised to adopt your head in a certain position. This helps to ensure that the gas or oil is lying against the area of the retina which has been treated, encouraging it to heal in the correct place