

YAG Laser Peripheral Iridotomy

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The eye produces fluid, which maintains healthy pressure within the eye and supplies certain parts of the eye with nutrition. This fluid is continuously produced as old fluid drains from the eye back into the blood stream. In some people, the drain may be prone to closing off which can cause a sharp rise in pressure. High pressure within the eye can lead to permanent vision loss.

In many cases this closing off of the drain can be prevented by making a small hole in the iris (the colored part of the eye) using a type of laser known as a YAG laser. This allows normal flow of fluid through the eye and out the drain. The hole, known as a peripheral iridotomy, is made by a laser and is not noticeable because it is hidden underneath your upper eyelid.

A common misconception is that this laser is used to improve vision. Lasers are used to improve vision in many cases, but this procedure is done only to prevent loss of vision.

The YAG laser peripheral iridotomy is done in the office and the amount of time you spend will be very limited. Your eye will not be dilated, but it will be numbed with anesthetic drops. You will also need to use a prescription eye drop four times a day for 1 week following the laser surgery. If you need a peripheral iridotomy in both eyes, the procedures are generally scheduled 1-2 weeks apart.

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