



Istent for the treatment of Open Angle Glaucoma

What is the Istent?

The Istent is a small medical device that safely lowers eye pressure by creating a permanent opening in the trabecular meshwork. It is a tiny one millimetre long titanium tube and is so small that you won't be able to see or feel it after the procedure is over. It can be inserted either alone or more commonly during cataract surgery.

Will the Istent cure my glaucoma?

No, the Istent will not cure your glaucoma; neither will it bring back any lost vision. However, it may prevent your glaucoma from getting worse by lowering your eye pressure. The Istent can also reduce your use of eye drops for glaucoma.

Is the Istent suitable for everyone?

Istent is suitable for patients who have open angle glaucoma, but may not be suitable in those who have very advanced glaucoma or where the natural drainage system has been severely damaged. Your doctor will discuss and explain the suitability of the Istent fully with you.

What are the risks of Istent?

Although Istent has been approved for use, it is a new procedure so there is still a lot to learn about it and some of the safety issues may not be known. We are continually examining the outcomes for patients who have the implant, so that we can understand more about it. There is a risk of the eye becoming inflamed and developing an infection, so you will be given anti-inflammatory and antibiotic eye drops to use after the operation to prevent this. A very small amount of bleeding inside the eye occurs during the operation but this resolves within a few days.

In some cases, the Istent may not lower the eye pressure. However, if this happens it will not create any additional harm to your eye.

What are the risks of not having the procedure?

If the eye pressure remains elevated despite medical therapy then there is a risk that your vision will deteriorate.

Are there any alternatives?

Alternatives include the standard glaucoma surgery (trabeculectomy), but this carries more risk than the istent procedure. Your doctor will be able to discuss this further.

Before your operation

You should continue any eye drops and tablets for your glaucoma as prescribed, unless directed otherwise by your ophthalmologist. If you take any blood thinning medicines for example Warfarin, please discuss this with the doctor or nurse in clinic.

You will be asked to attend a pre-operative assessment appointment. For this appointment

please bring with you an up to date list of your current medications and a brief summary of your medical history, available from your general practitioner (GP) if you are unsure. During this visit,

your general health and suitability for anaesthetic will be assessed. Any investigations for example blood tests will also be undertaken as appropriate.

During your operation

Implantation of an Istent takes only 10- 20 minutes. It is often performed at the end of cataract surgery but can also be done alone. Most people have the operation performed under a local anaesthetic, meaning that you are awake but your eye is numb so you will not feel anything.

After your operation

Immediately after your operation, a protective plastic shield will cover your eye. Eye drops are not usually required in your operated eye until the day after surgery. Any eye drops that you use in your other eye **must** be continued as normal. The morning after your operation, you can remove the protective eye shield. The eye drops you will need to use in your operated eye will be **different** from the drops that you used prior to your operation.

Drops will need to be used for approximately 4 weeks after your operation. Each time you attend the out- patient clinic any changes to your eye drops will be discussed with you. If you are running out of the drops, you must obtain a repeat prescription for them from your own GP.

Going home & Returning to work

The istent is performed as a day case procedure, which means that you will go home on the same day. You should avoid swimming for 4 weeks until your wound has healed. The length of time you will need off work depends upon the nature of your job. Most people need 1 – 2 weeks off after surgery. If your job involves heavy manual work or you work in a particularly dusty/dirty environment you may require longer; discuss this with your doctor/nurse. A self-certifying sick note is required for the first 7 days of absence and is available from your employer or GP, not from the hospital. After this, a medical sick note is required; this is available from your GP or hospital doctor.

There are no long-term restrictions following Istent surgery, so once your wound has healed and you feel able, you may carry on your activities as normal.

Post operative visits

Istent surgery should increase the drainage of fluid from the eye and so lower your eye pressure. Your eye pressure can drop as quickly as 24 hours after surgery, but you will not feel any different. You will be reviewed in the eye clinic one week after your operation and then again one month later. It is very important that you attend all your clinic appointments and use your eye drops as prescribed.

Will I still need to use my glaucoma eye drops?

Immediately after your operation, your consultant will advise you what drops you should continue to use. You should not stop your eye drops. Each patient is different and the exact eye pressure reduction as a result of the procedure varies. Your eye pressure will continue to be monitored during your follow up visits and treatment reviewed as necessary. After the procedure, you will be given a course of anti-inflammatory and antibiotic eye drops to use after your operation to prevent inflammation and infection.

Activities after Istent surgery

Initially after Istent surgery you need to ensure that you do not bump, rub or press on your eye

and that you avoid swimming for 4 weeks. This is important whilst your wound is healing and in order to reduce the risk of infection and injury.

There are no long-term restrictions following Istent surgery, you may carry on your activities as normal. The Istent is made from non-magnetic titanium so it is safe to have an MRI scan and will not set off airport scanners.

Contact information

Contact us immediately if you have:

- Loss of vision
- Your operated eye becomes increasingly red or painful

Contact the Glaucoma Specialist Nurse or nursing staff for advice and information Monday – Friday 8.30 am – 5.00 pm

Telephone: Contact 0121 424 0543 ask for Glaucoma specialist nurse/OPD sister

Clinic Contact Numbers:

	Appointments:	Nurses answer phone:
Heartlands	0121 424 0545	0121 424 1536
Solihull	0121 424 4463	0121 424 4456
Good Hope	0121 424 9651	0121 424 9667
Queen Elizabeth Hospital	0121 371 7070	0121 371 6476

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