



Treatment of Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) by intravitreal injection

You have been diagnosed with wet age-related macular degeneration (AMD) in youreye. This leaflet provides information about this eye condition. Treatment for wet AMD is by an injection into the back of the eye known as an intravitreal injection.

What is AMD?

AMD is an eye condition which is the leading cause of blindness in older people. There are two types of macular degeneration: dry and wet. In the 'dry' form of AMD there is atrophy (or wearing out) of the fine cells in the macula (the centre of the retina). No treatment has yet been proven to prevent or cure dry AMD, but research in this field continues. Currently visual aids may be used to support vision.

In the 'wet' form of AMD, abnormal blood vessels grow under the macula and affect the centre of the vision. Often such vessels leak blood or fluid and cause blurred or distorted vision. Without treatment, central vision loss may be severe and rapid.

How is AMD treated?

The medication used is an anti-vascular endothelial growth factor (anti-VEGF) drug which works by slowing or stopping the growth of the abnormal blood vessels and leakage that cause AMD.

How is treatment given?

The eye is numbed with anaesthetic drops and washed with iodine. The medication is injected into the vitreous in the eye, which is the jelly-like substance in the back

chamber of the eye. The injection takes about 30 seconds. You need to lie still during the injection. It is normal for your eye to feel a bit uncomfortable during the injection and for a few hours afterwards. It is also normal to see floaters after the injection.

Eye injections are repeated once a month for 3 months and then every 2 months for up to a year. You will have a scan after 5 injections and then the doctor will decide whether to continue regular injections, or to repeat the scans. We will let you know about this after 6 months of treatment. After the first year, you will have injections as needed based on our scan result. It is often necessary to attend for eye examinations and or injections on a monthly basis and perhaps for several years.

What are the results of treatment?

Treatment of AMD cannot undo the changes already present in the eye and the goal of treatment is therefore to prevent further loss of vision. Although some patients have regained vision, most patients' vision will stabilise after treatment. However the injections may not restore vision that has already been lost, and does not always prevent further loss of vision caused by the disease.

What will happen if I decide not to have the injection?

You do not have to receive treatment for your condition. However, if you delay starting treatment, your central vision may continue to get worse and then treatment may no longer help.

What are the complications of intravitreal eye injections?

The healthcare team will try to reduce the risk of complications. The possible complications are;

- Pain (risk 1 in 20). This is usually mild and controlled with simple pain killers. You should let staff know if it is severe.
- Bleeding on the outside of the eye during or after the injection (risk 1 in 5)
- Bleeding inside the eye (risk 1 in 1000) which may take months to improve or cause permanent loss of vision

- Infection (risk 1 in 1000) which may cause permanent loss of vision
- Raised pressure in the eye (risk less than 1 in 100). This can usually be treated with eye drops.
- Retinal detachment (risk 1 in 5000) which is lifting off of one of the layers at the back of the eye and requires surgery.
- Damage to the lens that causes a cataract requiring surgery (risk 1 in 1000)
- Stroke/ heart attack- this is very rare.

If there are any signs of eye/eyelid infection present on the day of your planned injection, your treatment may need to be re-booked for another time to allow control of such infection. Please inform your doctor or nurse if you have a sticky eye.

If you notice any **severe pain or loss of vision after your injection**
telephone: 01383 674130 or 01383 623623 ext 28394.

If after 5pm or at weekends contact the on-call ophthalmologist via switchboard

If you would like further information on AMD there are many sources of advice available. Brochures from relevant patient support groups are available in the cataract unit.

Royal National Institute of Blind People. (RNIB) Find out more at www.rnib.org.uk or phone the RNIB Helpline on 0303 123 9999.

The Macular Disease Society. Find out more at www.maculardisease.org or phone the Macular Disease Society Helpline on 0845 241 2041.

Also add in Seescape details