

MR RIAZ ASARIA BM MD FRCOphth
Consultant Ophthalmologist & Vitreo-Retinal Specialist
Mobile: 07816 814 338
Email: riazasaria@me.com

Office & Appointments
Tel: 0207 432 8315
Fax: 0207 432 8298
Email: info@londoneyecentres.co.uk

Practice Manager/Finance: 07557040097 Email: eyesurgeons@me.com

Platinum Medical Centre Wellington Hospital 15-17 Lodge Road London NW8 7JA
Hospital of St John & St Elizabeth 60 Grove End Road London NW8 9NH

INTRAVITREAL INJECTIONS

Eylea and Avastin

What is Anti- VEGF Intravitreal injection?

Anti-VEGF stands for anti-vascular endothelial growth factor. This treatment involves having an injection into your eye to treat certain retinal conditions that cause abnormal blood vessels to grow and leak under the retina. Your ophthalmologist will determine if the treatment is appropriate for you and which anti-VEGF injection will be used.

How is the intravitreal injection given?

- The drug is injected into your eye with a fine needle
- Minimal discomfort is to be expected (equivalent to having blood taken from your arm)
- The procedure takes five to seven minutes but the injection itself is over in less than 20 seconds
- The injection is given with you lying down comfortably on the couch. Or if you have reduced mobility and use a wheelchair we can when possible do the procedure with you in your chair
- Local anaesthetic drops are applied to numb your eye and minimise discomfort
- Your eyelids and surface of the eye are cleaned with antiseptic solution to help prevent infection
- A small plastic device with a side port is used to keep the eye open and to give the injection
- A few seconds later, the injection is given
- Your vision is assessed post injection by checking hand movements or counting fingers

What happens after your intravitreal injection?

- You might notice some discomfort and redness for the first few days after your treatment. This is often due to the nature of the antiseptic used
- If your eye becomes progressively red, sensitive to light, swollen and painful, or your vision gets worse after the anti-VEGF treatment you must seek medical help as this might indicate infection and normally occurs within the first week after the injection, but the risk is minimal
- There are no special precautions following intravitreal injections. You can travel and if you have any of the above problems please see an ophthalmologist
- Avoid getting water into your eye or swimming for the first few days

Are there any risks and side-effects associated with the intravitreal injection?

As with any medical procedure, there is a small risk of complications following anti-VEGF treatment. Most complications that might occur are from the injection itself, rather than the drug. For most patients the benefits outweigh the small risk of injection injury.

The following are the major potential risks and side effects of anti-VEGF injections but this is not a complete list of all risks. These risks are all rare. Significant loss of vision due to this treatment is very uncommon.

- Serious eye infection (one in 3,000 cases)
- Detached retina
- Increase in eye pressure
- Blood clots and bleeding in the eye
- Inflammation inside the eye
- Cataract

Some common side effects that could occur include:

- Red eye (there is usually a bleed on the white part/sub conjunctival space at the point of injection, which clears in a week or two)
- Sore and gritty eye (slight ache and discomfort lasting a day or two)
- 'Blobs' or 'small specks' in your vision ('floaters') might be seen for a few days after the injections. Also, there could be transient flashing lights or swirls of light immediately after the injection

For further information please contact us:

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