



Clearly Focused on You

eye care
associates, inc.

Trabeculectomy

Trabeculectomy is used to reduce pressure in the eyes caused by glaucoma. It is usually done when medication treatment for glaucoma has failed to reduce the pressure in the eye enough to prevent damage to a person's eyesight.

During trabeculectomy a piece of tissue in the drainage angle of the eye is removed, creating an opening. The opening is partially covered with a flap of tissue from the sclera, the white part of the eye, and the conjunctiva, the clear thin covering over the sclera. This new opening allows fluid to drain out of the eye, bypassing the clogged drainage channels of the trabecular meshwork.

The new opening created by trabeculectomy allows fluid to gather under the tissue that lines the eyeball, where it is absorbed into the bloodstream. This additional drainage channel helps lower the intraocular pressure and can significantly reduce the risk of continued visual field loss. As the fluid flows through the new drainage opening, the tissue over the opening rises to form a small, white bubble, called a bleb. The bleb is located on the white of the eye (the sclera), underneath the upper eyelid. During office visits after surgery, the doctor looks at the bleb to make sure that fluid is still draining out of the new opening.

What to Expect After Surgery

Immediately after surgery, antibiotics will be applied to the eye and injected under the outer lining of the eye. After surgery, the eyelid is usually taped shut, and an eye shield is placed over the eye. The person wears a dressing over the eye during the first night after surgery and wears the eye shield at bedtime for up to a month.

Corticosteroids are usually applied to the eye for about 2 to 3 months after surgery to decrease inflammation in the eye. People who have a trabeculectomy will have a checkup the following day with their eye specialist. Any activity that might jar the eye needs to be avoided after surgery. People usually need to avoid bending, lifting, or straining for several weeks after surgery. Usually there is mild discomfort after a trabeculectomy. Severe pain may be a sign of complications. If you have severe pain after a trabeculectomy, call your doctor immediately.

What to Think About

Trabeculectomy is the most frequently used surgery to treat glaucoma. As with any surgery there are risks associated with trabeculectomy, including:

- Very low pressures in the eye, which may necessitate a return to the Operating Room.
- Infection in the bubble created by the surgery, which can lead to infection of the eye itself.
- Clouding of the lens (cataract).
- Swelling of the clear covering (corneal edema) over the colored part of the eye.
- Decrease in visual acuity.

Scarring of the opening after surgery is the most common problem with trabeculectomy. The risk of scarring is decreased when corticosteroids and anti-healing medications, (i.e Mitomycin C), are used during and after surgery.

For more information, please contact our patient advisor by phone at 330-747-2733 or by email at info@eyecareassociates.com.