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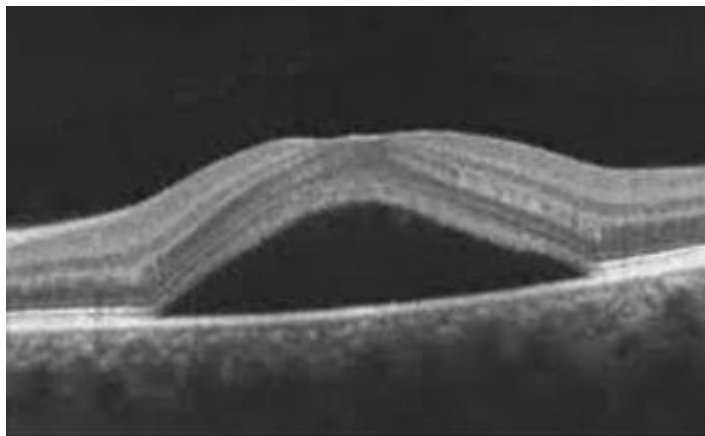
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## **Photodynamic Therapy**



### **What are the aims of Photodynamic Therapy (PDT) treatment?**

Certain conditions can lead to loss of vision due to buildup of fluid in the retina, (which is the layer at the back of the eye which enables us to see). The fluid leaks from abnormalities in blood vessels in the retina or from the layer below the retina (choroid).

The aims of PDT treatment are to reduce leakage of fluid and to stabilise your vision.

It can also treat some vascular tumours of the eye.

### **What conditions can PDT be used for?**

- Wet Age Related Macular Degeneration (AMD).
- Choroidal Central Serous Chorioretinopathy (CSCR).
- Polypoidal Choroidal Vasculopathy (PCV)

### **How does PDT treatment work?**

PDT is a treatment which applies a light, usually a laser, to activate a photosensitising agent (Verteporfin). An infusion of Verteporfin is given over 10 minutes - the dose is determined by your body surface area. During the infusion the Verteporfin is distributed within the blood vessels throughout the body, including blood vessels in the retina. About 15 minutes after the infusion the Verteporfin is activated using a laser, which leads to closure of blood vessels and reduces leakage of fluid. Both eyes can be treated in one session and treatments can be repeated after three months.

### **What will happen on the day of treatment?**

Please expect to be in the hospital between 1-2 hours for the treatment. We will need to dilate your pupil, so please do not drive to the appointment.

1. A nurse will check your vision and will put dilating drops in your eyes .You may need to have additional retinal scans and imaging done but this will already have been discussed with Ms Heng.
2. Ms Heng will sign the consent form with you, explaining again the risks of the procedures .
3. Your weight and height will be measured to calculate the correct dose of Verteporfin, which is administrated into the blood stream through a cannula into a vein in your arm (or less likely) in your hand.
4. The Verteporfin infusion will run for ten minutes while the medication circulates through the body and reaches the abnormal leaking blood vessels at the back of the eye, the retina and choroid.
5. You will be given anaesthetic drops 15 minutes after the start of the Verteporfin infusion. A special contact lens will be applied on your eye to focus the laser beam on your retina. A low energy laser is then directed to the abnormal leaking blood vessels to activate the drug over a fixed time of about one and a half minutes.

### **What are the side effects of PDT?**

- **Injection site reactions** During the infusion, the Verteporfin may leak into the tissue around the vein, causing an inflammatory reaction. In rare cases, this may lead to scarring.
- **Temporary lower back pain** This is reported to occur in 2% of patients. The back pain usually goes away quickly once the infusion finishes.
- **Blurring of vision** Some patients may experience a mild decrease in their vision in the first week after the treatment. Some published studies in which a full dose of Verteporfin was used reported that a rare amount (up to 4%) of patients may develop long term problems with their vision. The full dose of Verteporfin is used to treat AMD, PCV and vascular tumours. For the treatment of CSCR we use a half dose of Verteporfin which is expected to have a lesser risk of side effects.
- **Photosensitivity** In the first 48 hours after PDT, your skin will be much more sensitive to light and there will be a higher risk of sunburn. Verteporfin will make you very light sensitive for 48 hours after the treatment. Therefore, if you need to go outdoors during daylight you should fully cover your skin, including your head and eyes by wearing a hat, sunglasses, long sleeves, gloves and trousers/leg coverings. You can watch television and work indoors under artificial light but please avoid using halogen light. Please check the lighting conditions in your home before having PDT treatment.

- Hypersensitivity/allergic reactions Very rarely, patients may experience a severe allergic reaction following infusion of Verteporfin. In such cases emergency procedures may have to be put in place to protect your health. Please let your doctor know if you have had any allergic reactions in the past.

### **What to bring with you on the day of treatment**

- Sunglasses
- Clothes that protect your skin from sunlight (hat, scarf, long sleeves, trousers, gloves).

After your treatment It will not be safe for you to drive after the treatment as the dilating drops will blur your vision for up to six hours.

You are therefore advised to bring someone with you to your appointment.

For any queries, please contact us @

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