



Information Guide

Eye surgery

Corneal collagen cross-linking

Definition:

"Cross-linking" is a therapeutic innovation that increases corneal resistance (the clear front part of the eye globe) achieved by exposing it to long UV-A rays for 30 minutes.

The goal is to increase the strength of the corneal tissue to make it more rigid, which slows down its progressive deformation causing a decrease in vision. The goal is not to correct vision.



Procedure:

- It is a simple surgical procedure. It is done in ambulatory care, under local anaesthesia with the use of a few anaesthetic drops.
- The corneal epithelium (the superficial layer) is painlessly debrided. Drops will be applied every 2 minutes for 30-60 minutes. The cornea is then exposed to UV-A rays.
- A contact lens or a dressing is placed over the cornea at the end of the surgery. Local treatment of antibiotic and steroids will be prescribed for 2 weeks.

Pre-operative guidelines:

- Remove all facial cream and make-up.
- Remove your contact lenses.
- Have a normal diet prior to surgery.
- Make sure you understand well the postoperative recommendations and guidelines before leaving the hospital.
- Come to the hospital with someone as you will not be able to drive a motor vehicle after the procedure.

Medication:

- **VIGAMOX** or OCUFLOX or ZYMAR: An antibiotic used for the healing of the eye surface.
- **MAXIDEX**: An anti-inflammatory that is used until the inflammation resolves.
- **ACULAR**: An anti-inflammatory that can be used prior to the surgery to prevent and treat inflammation.
- **ARTIFICIAL TEARS** (Bion Tears/Celluvisc): These lubricate the eye in order to decrease dryness, pain and excessive watering of the eye.
- **TETRACAINE**: A white single-dose drop that freezes the pain for 30-45 minutes, to be used **ONLY** if the pain is too intense, at bedtime.
- **ANALGESICS**: Tylenol (acetaminophen), Advil or Motrin (ibuprofen). Used to treat moderate pain. To treat intense pain, an additional medication will be prescribed to you.

Post-operative guidelines:

During the first 3 days:

- The eye will remain frozen for 30-45 minutes after the surgery. During that period, blink your eyes often to prevent dryness.
- Take your analgesic as soon as possible, as it may take up to 60 minutes before you feel the effects.
- It might be impossible for you to open your eyes for the first few hours after the surgery. This is **NORMAL**.
- Application of ice or gel envelopes can help to ease the pain.
- Many patients will experience intense pain for 24-48 hours post surgery. Do not hesitate to take your pain medication.
- Do not wear make-up for 1 week after the surgery.
- In order to be more comfortable, avoid any visual work like reading, watching television or the computer for the first 24-48 hours.
- Resting with your eyes closed will promote healing.

During the first week:

- Secure the eye patch with the tape supplied by the pharmacy during naps and overnight.
- Keep your eyes closed when taking a shower or a bath in order to avoid having water and soap splash in the eyes. Do not rub your eyes.
- Avoid smoke and dust for the first few weeks.
- You will have a follow-up appointment the day after the surgery, and 4-5 days later for the removal of the contact lenses.
- If you lose a contact lens, **DO NOT PUT IT BACK IN THE EYE**. If you still feel comfortable enough, simply continue with the drops.
- It's normal to have blurry vision, watery eyes, eye redness and a feeling of burning and/or having a foreign object.

