



# Local anaesthetic

## What is local anaesthesia?

A local anaesthetic numbs a small part of your body – at Moorfields, your eye. It is used when the nerves can easily be reached either by drops or injections. For all types of local anaesthesia, you stay conscious during the operation and will be aware of bright light or moving shapes. You might feel the surgeon touching your eye, or pressure on your eye, but you should not feel anything sharp or painful. If you do feel pain, you must inform the surgeon. They can easily top up the local anaesthetic in almost all circumstances.

## What is topical anaesthesia?

This is achieved by administering numbing drops to anaesthetise your eye. This type of anaesthetic is suitable for some simple operations, but not all.

## What is a local anaesthetic block?

This could either be a sub-tenons block or a peribulbar block. With a **sub-tenons block**, we use numbing drops to anaesthetise the **front** of your eye before putting local anaesthetic **behind** your eye (where the nerves that supply sensation to the whole eyeball are located). This will freeze your eye and help **keep it still** for the surgery. The

effects of the local anaesthetic will last for several hours.

A **peribulbar block** is done much less frequently. Your anaesthetist will discuss this block in further detail if it is required.

## What are the complications of anaesthesia?

All procedures have associated risks. Sight and life-threatening complications can occur, but are extremely rare. You can discuss any specific concerns you may have with your surgeon or anaesthetist.

1. **Infection:** We take precautions to stop infection by using antiseptic solution.
2. **Bleeding:** You might have a bruise on or behind your eye. The risk of bruising is higher if you are taking blood-thinning tablets (such as warfarin, rivaroxaban, aspirin or clopidogrel). Bruising is harmless and goes away in a few days.

For more information on your anaesthetic please follow this link: <http://www.rcoa.ac.uk/patientinfo> or see our more detailed leaflet, 'Anaesthesia explained for Moorfields Eye Hospital'.

Friends of Moorfields charity have sponsored a series of information videos about the different types of anaesthetics we use at Moorfields. Please follow this link below:  
[www.friendsofmoorfields.org.uk/information-videos-about-anaesthetics/](http://www.friendsofmoorfields.org.uk/information-videos-about-anaesthetics/)

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### **Moorfields Direct telephone helpline**

Phone: 020 7566 2345  
Monday-Friday, 8.30am-9pm  
Saturday, 9am-5pm  
Information and advice on eye conditions and treatments from experienced ophthalmic-trained nurses.

### **Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)**

Phone: 020 7566 2324/ 020 7566 2325  
Email: [moorfields.pals@nhs.net](mailto:moorfields.pals@nhs.net)  
Moorfields' PALS team provides confidential advice and support to help you with any concerns you may have about the care we provide, guiding you through the different services available at Moorfields. The PALS team can also advise you on how to make a complaint.

### **Your right to treatment within 18 weeks**

Under the NHS constitution, all patients have the right to begin consultant-led treatment within 18 weeks of being referred by their GP. Moorfields is committed to fulfilling this right, but if you feel that we have failed to do so, please contact our patient advice and liaison service (PALS) who will be able to advise you further (see above). For more information about your rights under the NHS constitution, visit [www.nhs.uk/choiceinthenhs](http://www.nhs.uk/choiceinthenhs)

