

Laser photocoagulation

Laser photocoagulation is a controlled method of delivering focused laser power to the retina, creating limited burns. Laser photocoagulation has been used in retinal surgery for over xx years.

Several different types of lasers are used in ophthalmology. The type of laser used in retinal treatment is different from the lasers used in glaucoma treatment or refractive surgery such as LASIK.

Laser photocoagulation is used in the office to treat a variety of conditions including: Diabetic macular edema, proliferative diabetic retinopathy, retinal vein occlusion, retinal tears or holes, retinal detachment, high risk lattice degeneration, and retinal arterial macroaneurysm. Depending on the condition being treated, laser may be delivered with the surgeon wearing a headset (indirect ophthalmoscope) while the patient lays in an examination chair, or with the surgeon and patient sitting on opposite sides of table-mounted equipment (slit lamp).

Some treatments, such as those for retinal edema or small tears, may require relatively few laser burns. Other treatments, such as those for proliferative retinopathies or large retinal tears, may require hundreds of pulses delivered in rapid succession. Your surgeon will work with you to minimize any discomfort during the procedure by modifying the laser settings, using eye drops, and occasionally using a numbing injection around the eye.

Because laser photocoagulation is a non-invasive procedure, patients do not routinely require any eye drops after treatment. If the eye feels irritated or dry after treatment, over-the-counter artificial tear drops may be used to sooth the eye. After extensive treatments, some patients experience a minor headache, which may be treated using over-the-counter medications such as acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin) as needed. The vision is often blurred for several hours after laser treatment, and it is normal to experience colored hues in the vision during this time. Vision in the treated eye may not return to pre-treatment levels for one or two days in some cases.



Bay Area
Retina
Associates

Diseases and Surgery of the Retina and Viterous
800-5-Retina bayarearetina.com
(800-573-8462)

Craig Leong MD | Stewart Daniels MD Subhransu Ray MD, PhD | Daniel Ting MD, PhD Tushar Ranchod MD | Roger Goldberg MD,MBA | Caesar K. Luo, MD, FACS

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