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Intravitreal Injection Information

Please Read This Carefully

We are proceeding to commence a course of intravitreal therapy for your retinal disease.

Intravitreal injections for retinal disease are commonly performed procedure by Ophthalmologists. The most common conditions treated are age-related macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy and retinal vein occlusions. The procedure is performed in a clinic or a day surgery facility and is associated with minimal to no discomfort after the application of a topical anesthetic in combination with either a topical anesthetic gel or subconjunctival anesthetic injection. A small amount of medication is injected into the vitreous cavity with an associated transient rise in intraocular pressure. Infrequently the intraocular pressure rise is significantly requiring additional intervention and monitoring until it normalizes. You will go home on the same day without any additional treatment in the majority of cases.

How should your eye feel after intravitreal injection?

Most patients have minimal to no discomfort during the procedure or afterwards.

About 1:20 cases of intravitreal injection will be associated with a small residual air bubble seen at the bottom of the eye afterwards by the patient. This is due to air in the syringe which can be sometimes difficult to remove. The air bubble will disappear usually within 24 hours and is harmless to the eye.

Some patients will report ocular surface discomfort which settles usually within 24 hours and can be treated, if needed, with preservative-free lubricants. On rare occasions, patients experience significant discomfort requiring review. In the majority of these cases, this is due to ocular surface irritation from some of the drops used during the procedure including the

anesthetic or the antiseptic. I will advise you on how we can prevent against this ocular surface toxicity should it happen. Even more uncommonly, ocular pain in the first week may be due to infection and **this is an emergency**. See below for more details.

What should I be looking out for after intravitreal injection?

The most important thing to prevent, and recognize early should it happen, is an **intraocular eye infection, called endophthalmitis**. Thankfully, this is uncommon with rates reported anywhere from approximately 1:1000 to 1:9000. Prompt recognition and treatment are required to prevent poor outcomes, which include blindness. Treatment is with urgent injections of antibiotics into the eye. Symptoms include pain, sensitivity to light, increase redness and decreased vision. The most important thing is to call me immediately on my mobile phone, 0400099722, to arrange a prompt review. Should I be unavailable then you should present to the emergency department at the Canberra Hospital, Yamba Drive, Garran, ACT 2609. You should call the hospital in advance on 02 62442222 so they can notify the Ophthalmology team.

Other complications that can happen after intravitreal injection include vitreous hemorrhage, retinal detachment, lens trauma and retinal trauma, all of which can lead to decreased vision and potentially blindness. Thankfully there are all exceptionally rare.

EMERGENCIES: DR RICHARD BARRY - 0400099722