

Ozurdex intravitreal injections

This is a drug which is injected into the eye, rather than given as drops or ointment.

What does this involve?

It is an outpatient procedure that takes approx 10 minutes. First, anaesthetic drops are put into the eye to make it numb. You are then asked to lie down on a couch and the eye is cleaned with a special disinfectant. The face is covered with a special clean cloth, which lies lightly over the face. It can be held away from the mouth to allow plenty of air if you feel claustrophobic. A small clip is placed in the eye that holds the eyelids open. After further drops, the injection is given, lasting about 5-10 seconds. You may experience a pressure sensation, but it is not usually painful. A cotton bud is pressed against the surface of the eye for 1-2 minutes to allow the wound to seal and antibiotic drops are given. You are allowed to go home, and need to use the drops given as instructed.

What are the risks?

Since the needle is entering the eye there is a small risk of infection, serious bleeding or retinal detachment. These risks are rare, about 1 in 1000 or less.

Specific risks for Ozurdex

This steroid preparation is licensed for use for patients with a retinal vein occlusion. There is a chance of the pressure in the eye rising. This is usually temporary and controlled with eye drops in most patients. There is no worsening of cataract for most patients, however, this may occur in a few patients but may not necessarily require cataract surgery.

There is potential for some discomfort, bruising / bleeding and you may experience some sensitivity to light. You may also experience 'floaters' black spots in the eye and a feeling of looking through mist or fog. This is normal and should go away within a few days.

What are the benefits?

The specific benefits for your condition will be discussed by the ophthalmologist. For retinal vein occlusion some patients may benefit from laser treatment. Most patients are unlikely to improve without an injection of steroid. Repeated injections may be required over 2-years, with steroids this is usually 2 injections each year for the first year, with some chance of repeated treatments in the next 2-years (not more than 2 per year). As time goes on there is less chance of needing an injection as the condition tends to stabilise after 2-years or so.

For central and branch retinal vein occlusion

With Ozurdex there is a 40% chance of gaining 3 lines of vision compared with 20% without treatment. Repeated injections are usually needed after 3-4 months to maintain the effect.

Contact details 9.00am to 5.00pm

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