**What is an intravitreal Injection?**

An intravitreal injection is an injection into the vitreous which is the jelly like substance inside your eye. It is performed to place medicines inside the eye, near the retina.

**Why is an intravitreal injection performed?**

Intravitreal injections are used to deliver drugs to the retina and other structures in the back of the eye. Common conditions treated with intravitreal injections include diabetic retinopathy, macular degeneration, retinal vascular diseases and ocular inflammation. These conditions often require a course of repeated intravitreal injections.

**What is the intravitreal injection procedure?**

We will lie you in a comfortable position. Drops will be placed in your eye to numb the eye and may sting for a few seconds and your eye will be cleaned with an antiseptic solution. The eye is usually held open with a small spring instrument called an eye speculum.

The medicine is then injected into the vitreous (centre) of the eye. You may feel slight pressure and a momentary sharp feeling on the eye when this is done. After the injection procedure, the doctor will check your eye, and eye drops or ointment will be placed in the eye.

**What are the side effects?**

After the injection you may have a gritty feeling in the eye and the eye may look bloodshot. This will usually resolve over a few days. You may see floaters which will become smaller and disappear over one to two weeks. Sometimes you may see round floaters which are tiny bubbles of air, these are harmless, and will be absorbed by the eye within one to two days.

**Are there any risks?**

Injecting any medication into the eye may result in increased pressure within the eye, inflammation, or more serious side effects such as endophthalmitis which is an infection of the eye and can cause visual loss or loss of the eye itself, cataract formation, bleeding within the eye, damage to the retina (retinal detachment or tear) or other eye structures. These side effects are rare, estimated at less than 1 per 300 injections.

It is also possible that intravitreal injection may be associated with arterial thromboembolic events eg heart attack, stroke or vascular death. Allergic reactions to the medication are also possible.

**Preparation for the injection**

It is very important for you to tell us about any health conditions that you have, all the medications that you are taking, and especially any allergies to medications that you have had in the past.

You must not drive following an intravitreal injection and it is advisable that you have a support person with you on the day of the procedure.

If you have any queries or concerns please contact the Outpatients Department on 5436 8551 (Monday to Friday or the Emergency department after hours.)

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