

# Miller Eye Center

2995 Eastrock Drive  
Rockford, IL 61109  
815-226-1500  
millereyecenter.com

## Fact Sheet: Argon Laser Trabeculoplasty (ALT)

Laser surgery has become increasingly popular as an intermediate step between drugs and traditional glaucoma surgery. Argon Laser Trabeculoplasty (ALT) is Medicare approved and the most common type of laser surgery performed for glaucoma and can be very cost effective. Although your doctor may suggest ALT surgery at any time, it is often performed after trying to control intra-ocular pressure (IOP) with medicines. Some doctors have promoted it as a primary therapy in the treatment of glaucoma, especially for those patients who have contraindications to glaucoma medications, side effects from glaucoma medications, or cannot afford the medications.

***With two laser treatments, ALT has an 86% success rate to decrease your intra-ocular pressure by 30%, typically eliminating the need for one glaucoma drop. It can take up to two months to see the peak effect of the laser treatment. The effect of the surgery may wear off over time, but can last up to 5-10 years.***

### **ALT is for those:**

- Who have been diagnosed with glaucoma
- Whose doctor has determined that ALT is appropriate for controlling their intra-ocular pressure

### **What to expect on procedure day:**

Your treatment will be performed here in the clinic, in a specially equipped laser room. It does not require a surgery center. There are no injections or needles used. You will be given a preliminary drop to prevent any increase in eye pressure after the laser. Once you have been checked in, you will be settled comfortably in the laser room. Drops will be used to numb your eye. Dr. Miller will apply a special lens filled with a clear gel to your eye that focuses the laser. The laser light is aimed at the lens and reflected onto the trabecular meshwork inside your eye. You may see flashes of light and hear a beep with each laser application. This is a painless procedure, and the entire laser treatment usually takes five minutes.

### **After the procedure:**

There is generally no discomfort after the procedure. Do not rub your eye, as the eye is numb and a scratched eye can easily occur. Vision is blurred for an hour or two due to the contact lens gel. You will be given some steroid eye drops to take four times a day for a week. You will continue all your regular glaucoma drops. Follow-up visits are very important to monitor your eye pressure. It can take some time to see the peak pressure-lowering effect of ALT, during which time you will have to continue taking your medication. Remember, too, that the maximum effectiveness of ALT is seen with two laser treatments, so some patients will need a second laser to see any improvement.

**Ask your doctor if you are a candidate for Argon Laser Trabeculoplasty!**