

What SLT does

SLT is a clinic-based laser treatment that lowers pressure inside the eye. It applies short, low-energy pulses to the trabecular meshwork, the eye's natural drainage system, triggering a biological response that can improve drainage. There is no incision, injection or implant.

Why pressure matters

Glaucoma damages the optic nerve, and sight already lost cannot be restored. Eye pressure is the most important risk factor that can be modified. Lowering it reduces the risk of future damage, but there is no single safe pressure for everybody. Your target depends on your optic nerve, your scans, your visual fields, your starting pressure and your individual risk.

Do you need SLT?

SLT is used for open-angle glaucoma and ocular hypertension. It can be offered before daily eye drops, or added when existing treatment is not lowering pressure enough. Not every raised pressure requires treatment, and not every type of glaucoma is suitable: the drainage angle must be accessible to the laser. If observation, drops or another treatment is better for you, we will say so.

Measurement decides treatment

Before recommending SLT your pathway may include repeated pressure measurements, examination of the drainage angle, corneal thickness, OCT imaging of the optic nerve and visual field testing. Treatment has a defined purpose: to lower your pressure towards the target appropriate for your eye. Follow-up measures whether it achieved that.

On the day

- Eat, drink and take your usual medication normally unless told otherwise.
- Continue your existing glaucoma drops unless your consultant says otherwise.
- Anaesthetic drops numb the eye and a small contact lens rests gently on it.
- You see a bright light and hear clicks. Most patients feel little or nothing.
- The laser takes only a few minutes per eye.
- Vision may be temporarily blurred, so arrange your journey home.

Afterwards

Mild grittiness, aching, redness or blurred vision can occur temporarily. SLT takes weeks to work, so your pressure is reassessed rather than assumed. Do not stop your existing glaucoma drops unless your consultant specifically tells you to.

How well does it work?

A large randomised trial found SLT safe and effective as a first-line treatment, with many patients remaining at target pressure without drops over several years. Response varies: some eyes respond strongly, some modestly and some insufficiently. The effect can diminish over time, and SLT can sometimes be repeated.

Main risks

A temporary rise in eye pressure can occur after treatment, which matters most in eyes where the optic nerve is already vulnerable. Mild inflammation, discomfort, redness and temporary blurred vision are common and usually short lived. A minority of eyes do not achieve a useful pressure reduction. Significant complications are uncommon, but SLT does not guarantee that further drops, laser or glaucoma surgery will never be required.

SLT does not cure glaucoma

A successful SLT lowers pressure; it does not remove the underlying susceptibility of the optic nerve. Long-term monitoring remains essential, including pressure measurement, OCT imaging and visual field testing where appropriate. The question is not only

whether the laser worked, but whether the pressure is low enough to protect this optic nerve over your lifetime.

If the pressure does not fall enough

An insufficient response does not necessarily mean anything went wrong. Biological response varies between eyes. Your consultant may recommend allowing more time, continuing or changing drops, repeating SLT where appropriate, or another glaucoma treatment. Having SLT does not remove any of those options.

Warning signs, seek urgent assessment

Severe or increasing eye pain, marked redness, a substantial worsening of vision, severe light sensitivity, or worsening halos with headache, nausea or vomiting. Contact Blue Fin Vision® without delay or seek urgent ophthalmic assessment. Mild grittiness and temporary blur shortly after treatment are expected and are different from symptoms that are severe or worsening.

Costs

Consultation and diagnostic assessment: £325. SLT: £1,000 one eye, £1,800 both eyes. Private medical insurance commonly covers medically indicated treatment, subject to your policy and prior authorisation. You receive a written quotation before you commit.

What the treatment fee includes

Your SLT performed by a Blue Fin Vision® consultant ophthalmic surgeon, the treatment-day clinical assessment, pressure monitoring associated with treatment, post-laser medication where required, and routine follow-up relating to the SLT. Treatment of a separate or unrelated eye condition is quoted separately.

This page is a summary, not a consent document

It does not replace the full SLT Laser patient information booklet, which contains the complete information on why treatment may be recommended, alternatives, risks, limitations and aftercare, and which forms part of your informed consent alongside your discussion with your surgeon and your consent form. Please read the full booklet before your appointment. In full: [The Blue Fin Vision® Advantage](#)

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