

## Your condition

The retina is a layer at the back of the eye that is responsible for vision. With diabetic retinopathy your retina may go through a series of changes. These may include leakage or closure of capillaries (tiny blood vessels) or growth of weak, new capillaries. These changes may progress in severity leading to reduced vision.

Diabetic retinopathy is best managed with good blood pressure and blood glucose control.



Leaking blood vessels



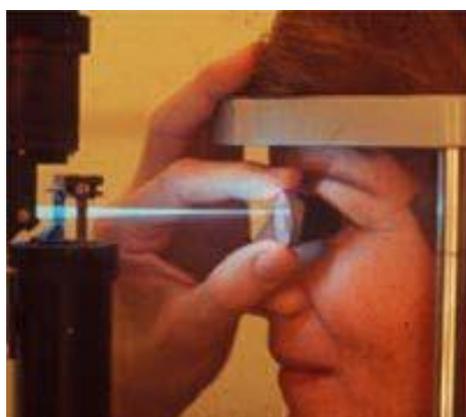
Closed blood vessels decrease oxygen



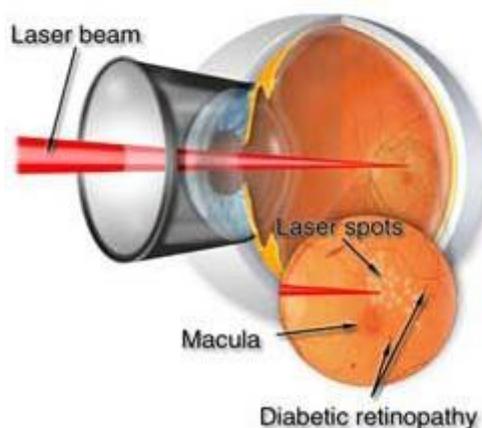
Weak new blood vessels

## What does the laser do and how does it work?

This type of laser treatment is performed using a thermal laser. Focal laser is targeted at specific areas of the retina to seal up these leaking blood vessels. The amount of laser burns to the retina varies, depending upon the severity of your retinopathy.



Focal Laser



## What to expect

- You will be in the hospital for around 3 to 4 hours.
- You will be given drops to enlarge your pupil, so you will be unable to drive home.
- Local anaesthetic drops will also be put in your eye before the procedure.
- Treatment is delivered through a lens which rests against the eye.
- Please take all of your usual medications prior to your appointment, unless otherwise advised by your doctor.
- If you have diabetes please ensure you have your normal meals and bring snacks for while you wait.
- Side effects may include slight discomfort and sensitivity to light (photophobia). Wearing sunglasses (with your prescription, if required) can make the trip home more comfortable.
- Please arrange for someone to pick you up and drive/take you home.

## More information

The Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital  
Ph: 03 9929 8666  
[www.eyeandear.org.au](http://www.eyeandear.org.au)

Diabetes Australia - Victoria  
Ph: 03 9667 1777  
[www.diabetesaustralia.com.au](http://www.diabetesaustralia.com.au)

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