

## A second look at glaucoma surgery

September 18 2014

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Acute angle closure glaucoma of the right eye (intraocular pressure was 42 in the right eye). Credit: James Heilman, MD/Wikipedia

New research led by Queen's University professor Robert Campbell (Ophthalmology) has revealed using anti-inflammatory medications after glaucoma laser surgery is not helpful or necessary.

Glaucoma is the most common cause of irreversible blindness in the world and about 400,000 Canadians are afflicted with the disease, which is mainly caused by pressure within the eye being high enough to damage the [optic nerve](#). The optic nerve is responsible for sending messages from the eye to the brain and is a vital part of vision.

"The use of strong anti-inflammatory therapies after glaucoma laser surgery became standard practice years ago, in an era when the type of laser we used was much more destructive. Today's laser systems are

much gentler, and we felt that the use of anti-inflammatory steroids may not be necessary. In fact, we thought that a small amount of inflammation might actually be helpful in causing greater pressure-lowering effects from the [laser treatment](#)," says Dr. Campbell, who also works at Hotel Dieu Hospital.

Dr. Campbell and his research team carried out the first placebo controlled randomized clinical trial focusing on the effects of post-laser medications. They found that steroids and nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs do not affect the ability of the laser treatment to lower [eye pressure](#) and do not influence complication rates.

"These findings have the potential to change patient care after glaucoma [laser surgery](#) and could save the Canadian healthcare systems millions of dollars by decreasing the use of drugs following this very common procedure," says Dr. Campbell.

The research results were published in *Ophthalmology*.

**More information:** *Ophthalmology*, [www.aaojournal.org/article/S01... \(14\)00621-6/abstract](http://www.aaojournal.org/article/S01... (14)00621-6/abstract)

Provided by Queen's University

Citation: A second look at glaucoma surgery (2014, September 18) retrieved 20 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-09-glaucoma-surgery.html>

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