Glaucoma surgery

Glaucoma means that the pressure in your eye is too high. The high pressure damages the optic nerve that takes vision information from your eye to your brain. Glaucoma operations bring the pressure in the eye down and stop damage to the optic nerve.

How does it work?
You will be given a general anaesthetic. This means you will be asleep during your operation to make sure you lie still and don’t feel anything. The picture below shows the surgeon examining the eyes before surgery.

In a glaucoma operation, the surgeon opens up the blocked drainage channel or makes a new drainage channel, so that some fluid can escape from the inside of your eye to lower the pressure. Or, sometimes the surgeon uses a laser beam so that your eyes make less fluid which will bring the pressure down.

Why do I have to have an operation?
Eye drops can help get your eye pressure down, but you have to keep using them every day and sometimes the pressure is not low enough to be safe for your eye. When this happens, it is usually better for children with glaucoma to have an operation –if it works really well, you don’t need to use any more drops!

What will happen afterwards?
After your operation, you will have a patch on your eye which the doctors will take off the next day. The nurses on the ward will give you eye drops to take home and put in a few times a day to help your eye get better. The doctor will need to see you in the clinic regularly. If you wear glasses, you still need to keep wearing them.

Are there any side-effects?
Young people’s eyes are delicate and sometimes there can be problems, such as an infection, or the pressure can get too low or too high again. You
might need extra treatment. The eye doctors will keep a check on you regularly and treat any problems if they happen.

**Will the operation work?**
Glaucoma operations usually work and bring the eye pressure down. Sometimes children may need more than one glaucoma operation.

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