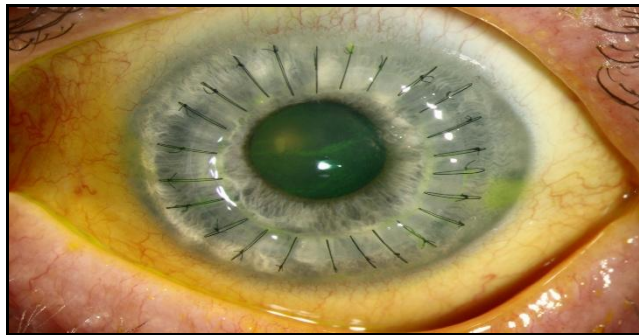


## Patient Information

### Deep Anterior Lamellar Keratoplasty (DALK)

#### Eye Unit



#### What is DALK?

Deep Anterior Lamellar Keratoplasty (**DALK**) is a type of “**Partial Thickness Corneal Transplant**”. In this surgery, the front layers of your cornea (including the damaged layers) are removed and replaced with healthy donor tissue – but **inner layer (endothelium)** is left untouched. This helps preserve more of your natural eye tissue and reduces the risk of rejection.

#### Why DALK maybe recommended:

##### DALK is commonly used for patients with:

1. Keratoconus
2. Corneal scars (not affecting the endothelium).
3. Corneal stromal dystrophies
4. Eye trauma involving the front layers.

#### How is the procedure done?

- The surgery is done under general anaesthesia.
- Only the damaged front part of the cornea is removed.
- A donor cornea is prepared and stitched in place.
- The inner layer of your cornea is kept intact
- Surgery typically takes 60-90 minutes & may be done as a day procedure.

## Benefits of DALK:

- ✓ Lower risk of graft rejection (since endothelium – the innermost layer of cornea) is not replaced.
- ✓ Preserves your natural inner corneal layer.
- ✓ Long term graft survival is higher than full thickness transplants.
- ✓ Less risk of developing glaucoma
- ✓ Early recovery

## Possible Risks and Complications:

1. Graft rejection (rare but possible).
2. Infection.
3. Astigmatism or blurred vision.
4. Interface haze (mild cloudiness between layers).
5. In some cases, if DALK cannot be completed, the surgeon may convert to a full thickness transplant (PKP).

## What to Expect After Surgery:

- Vision will be blurry at first, then slowly improve over months.
- You will need to use eyedrops regularly.
- Sutures/stitches are left in for many months & removed gradually.
- Regular follow ups are very important to monitor healing and detect early problems.

## Post Operative Care:

1. Use prescribed eye drops exactly as instructed.
2. Do not rub your eyes.
3. Wear a protective eye shield while sleeping for the first few weeks.
4. Avoid swimming, dusty environments and heavy lifting.
5. Attend all follow-up appointments.
6. Report any pain, redness, sudden vision changes or light sensitivity immediately.

## Recovery Timeline:

| Time Frame    | What to Expect                                           |
|---------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| 1-2 weeks     | Can resume light activities.                             |
| 1-3 months    | Gradual vision improvement.                              |
| 6-12 months   | May start removing stitches.                             |
| After healing | Glasses or contact lenses may be needed for best vision. |

**Contact us:**

**EEC Tel: 01633 – 238856** during working days/hours.

**Weekend/Out of Hours:** Ophthalmology on Call Team via switchboard  
**01633- 234234**

**E-mail (only if needs advice):** [EmergencyEyeClinic.abb@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:EmergencyEyeClinic.abb@wales.nhs.uk)

**“This document is available in Welsh /  
Mae’r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg”**