

BPH medications and eye surgery

What are BPH medications?

Certain medications known as **alpha-blockers** are commonly used to improve urination in men with a condition called **benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH)** or enlarged prostate. These alpha-blocker drugs include tamsulosin (Flomax[®]), terazosin (Hytrin[®]), doxazosin (Cardura[®]) and alfuzosin (Uroxatral[®]). These medications work by relaxing a type of muscle called smooth muscle in the bladder and the prostate, helping to ease urination.

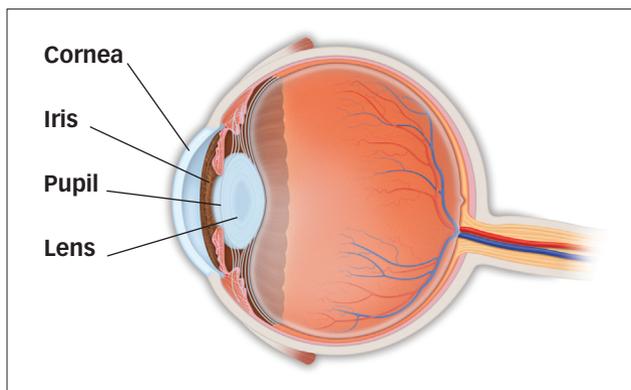
HOW CAN BPH MEDICATIONS AFFECT EYE SURGERY?

A side effect of alpha-blocker drugs is that they may affect the smooth muscle within the iris that controls your pupil size. During cataract surgery, your eye surgeon wants your pupil to stay as widely dilated as possible. Alpha-blockers may prevent the pupil from dilating adequately, or may cause the pupil to suddenly constrict. This condition is called **intraoperative floppy iris syndrome (IFIS)**, and it can make cataract surgery more complicated if it occurs and the surgeon is not anticipating it. This effect on the iris muscle can persist long after stopping the medication.

Fortunately, these BPH medications do not cause any other problems with your eyesight or vision.

HOW IS IFIS TREATED?

If you are having intraocular surgery, it is very important that you tell your ophthalmologist (Eye M.D.) if you are taking any medications for BPH. Studies have shown that as long as the surgeon is aware that patients are taking alpha-blockers or have taken them in the past, the success rate with cataract surgery is still excellent.



Eye anatomy



A cataract patient undergoes a slit-lamp exam.

Your surgeon may use additional dilating agents or a device to stabilize your iris to minimize the risk of complications.

Be sure to talk with your ophthalmologist before eye surgery if you take any BPH medications.



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COMPLIMENTS OF YOUR OPHTHALMOLOGIST:

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