ND-YAG VASCULAR LASER:
The Nd-YAG laser is used to treat dilated small blood vessels (telangiectasia) and diffuse redness. Deeper and larger red and purple vascular lesions may also be treated, including lip venous lakes and birthmarks such as port wine stains, venous malformations and haemangiomas. The laser heats and destroys blood vessels with minimal damage to the surrounding skin. The causes of telangiectasia and redness include hereditary influences on complexion, sun damage, temperature extremes and acne rosacea. As these are usually ongoing problems, it is usual for them to return over a few years. The laser treatment may be repeated when necessary.

THE PROCEDURE:
Your face will be photographed preoperatively. It is important for your eyes to be shielded from the laser beam and they will be covered prior to starting treatment. The laser light is delivered in small circles which feel like a rubber band flick. The laser light is delivered through a cold tip but you will still be aware of some pain and heat. The strength of the laser may be reduced if you find it too uncomfortable.

POSTOPERATIVE COURSE:
The treated area will be red for 1-2 hours. If you develop purplish discoloration, this may last for 1-2 weeks. If you have had lasering near the eyes, you may develop some swelling over 2-3 days which may lead to partial (rarely complete) closure of the eye. Using ice packs (or frozen peas in a bag) every hour for 10-15 minutes on the day of the procedure can reduce swelling. If you have had an internal eye shield, you will need to patch the eye for 4 hours and apply eye ointment (Chlorsig) twice daily for 3 days.
You may develop some small scabs or blisters over the 1-2 days following the laser treatment. These will heal completely over 7-10 days on the face. Do not pick at these scabs or apply bandaids to the area. You may wash gently and apply Vaseline frequently during this time. If you have had an internal eye shield, you will need to patch the eye for 4 hours and apply eye ointment (Chlorsig) twice daily for 3 days.

POST BIRTHMARK TREATMENT:
Birthmarks are usually treated more strongly so extra care is required post procedure. Shower and bathe the treated area as normal but gently pat the skin dry. Avoid shaving until the bruising and swelling has settled. A moisturiser (e.g. aqueous cream) is often soothing and reduces the likelihood of crusting. If crusting does occur, use an antibiotic ointment (Bactroban ointment) 3 times daily to reduce the risk of infection.

COMPLICATIONS:
Usually 3 treatments are required for telangiectasia, however problems may sometimes be very resistant and do not respond despite repeated treatments. For birthmarks, 4-6 treatments are usual and one usually gets improvement rather than resolution of the problem.

VASCULAR LASER TREATMENT
PATIENT INFORMATION