



Tuesday 19 May 16.00 – 17.30 Recreational drugs and the eye: from acute toxicity to long-term impact

Recreational drug use is an escalating global concern, with important ocular manifestations that are often under-recognised in both acute and outpatient ophthalmic practice. This seminar brings together an international panel of speakers to highlight how common recreational substances affect the eye, ranging from subtle retinal changes to sight-threatening emergencies.

The session will open with Prof. Carl-Heinz Kruse providing an international overview of drug-related ocular disease, drawing on experiences from Europe and South Africa. This will set the stage for understanding how patterns of recreational drug use vary across regions and how these differences shape ophthalmic presentations and service demands.

Dr Marwa Mohamed will focus on nitrous oxide abuse, a growing problem particularly among teenagers and young adults. She will outline its systemic and ocular complications, including optic neuropathy and visual loss, and provide practical advice for recognising and managing cases in the eye clinic.

Dr Viresh Dullabh will highlight corneal complications associated with the use of drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamine, including keratitis, ulceration, and delayed healing..

Finally, Dr Conor Malone will present on poppers maculopathy, a well-characterised entity with distinctive OCT findings and a growing body of evidence on prognosis and patient counselling.

By combining international perspectives with clinical case examples, this seminar will give delegates a clear understanding of the diverse ways recreational drugs affect ocular health. Attendees will gain skills to recognise characteristic clinical and imaging findings, manage acute complications, and appreciate the broader safeguarding and public health responsibilities of ophthalmologists.

By the end of the session, delegates will be able to:

Recognise the characteristic ocular presentations of specific recreational drugs.

Interpret imaging findings in drug-related maculopathy.



Apply practical management strategies in drug-related ocular emergencies and longer-term care.

Understand the broader safeguarding and medico-legal implications when recreational drug use is suspected.

Co-Chairs:

Miss Shivona Chetty, Consultant Ophthalmologist, Ninewells Hospital, Dundee, Scotland

Miss Jae Ku, Academic Clinical Lecturer, University of Liverpool, England

Speakers:

"Recreational Drugs and the Eye: An International Perspective"

Prof. Carl-Heinz Kruse, Professor of Ophthalmology, South Africa/Germany

"Nitrous Oxide Abuse and Ocular Health in Teenagers"

Dr Marwa Mohamed, Associate Specialist in Ophthalmology, Rotherham, UK

"Corneal Complications of Drug Use"

Dr Viresh Dullabh, Consultant Ophthalmologist, South Africa

"Poppers Maculopathy"

Dr Conor Malone, Senior Fellow, Oxford Eye Hospital, UK