1-3 snip punctoplasty
To improve drainage of tears

Information for patients
Ophthalmology (Ocular Plastics)
This leaflet provides further information about the problem you have with your eyes, and how surgery can be used to treat it.

You have been given a separate booklet about the treatment centre you will be attending. Please refer to it for information about:

- Your anaesthetic
- How you need to prepare
- Where you need to go
- What happens after the procedure

**Why do I need this procedure?**

There is a small hole at the inner corner of the upper and lower eyelids. These holes are known as puncta. The puncta are one of the structures responsible for collecting tears which then drain away into the nasal passages.

If the puncta are too small, tears will be unable to drain away properly. This results in a watery eye. Tears may even spill over onto the cheeks causing soreness and irritation to the skin.
What is a 3 or 1 snip procedure?

A 3 or 1 snip procedure is a minor operation on the lower puncta, to make the holes slightly larger. This means tears can drain away more effectively after the operation.

Up to three small cuts ('snips') are made into the skin surrounding the puncta, usually on the lower eyelid. Sometimes the surgeon may flush some water through the tear duct to check if the puncta has opened sufficiently. You may feel this in the back of your throat.

No stitches are required. You will have a follow up appointment a few weeks after the procedure to assess if it has been successful.

How long does the procedure usually take?

Typically it takes about 15-20 minutes.
What are the risks of surgery?

All operations have some level of risk. The risks for this operation are detailed below. The surgeon will discuss these with you when you sign the consent form before your operation.

There are some common effects of the surgery, which normally settle gradually:

- Bleeding from the wound: this should settle within a few hours

- Bruising and swelling of the eyelids: this should settle within a few days
There can occasionally be some problems after the surgery, which may require further attention:

- Infection: we will provide you with an antibiotic cream to help prevent this.

- The puncta may scar and become small again, or sometimes may close completely. Further surgery may be needed to correct this.

- In some cases, the blockage may be further down the tear drainage system, and this operation will not resolve the problem. This may require a different operation; your doctor will discuss it with you if this arises.

We will provide you with further advice on how to look after yourself when you are discharged from hospital.

If I choose not to have surgery what could happen?

You are likely to continue with the same symptoms of excessive tears and irritation to the surrounding skin.
Are there any alternatives to surgery?
Unfortunately there are no alternatives to surgery for this problem.

Who should I contact if I have any concerns?
If you have any further questions or concerns, you can contact the Oculoplastic Team as follows:

- 0114 271 1727 (Monday to Wednesday)
- 0114 226 8964 or
- 0114 271 2365 (Monday to Friday)