

Patient Information about Cataracts

<http://vision.healthcommunities.com/patient-information-cataracts/index.shtml>

Cataracts occur when the lens of the eye, which is normally clear, becomes cloudy. Most cataracts occur in older adults. A cataract can develop in one eye or in both eyes at the same time. Cataract symptoms include cloudy, blurred, or double vision; impaired night vision; sensitivity to light; and seeing halos around lights.

Cataracts usually are diagnosed by an eye doctor (e.g., optometrist, ophthalmologist) during a routine eye exam. Treatment often involves cataract surgery to remove the clouded lens and replace it with a clear implant. Eye surgery for cataracts has become fairly common. The procedure is done one eye at a time on an outpatient basis.

Here are some questions to ask your doctor about cataracts. **Print this page**, check off the questions you would like your eye care specialist to answer, and take it with you to your appointment. The more information you have about cataracts, the easier it will be to make decisions about your cataract treatment.

Questions to Ask Your Doctor about Cataracts

- What is a cataract?
- What type of cataract do you suspect that I have?
- Will I need any other diagnostic tests? If so, what do these eye tests involve?
- How should I prepare for these tests?
- What are the risks and benefits associated with these tests?
- What can I do to help prevent a cataract from getting worse or a cataract from developing in my other eye?
- Can other health conditions affect my eyes? If so, what can I do to help prevent these health conditions?
- Can I still wear contact lenses if I have a cataract?

Questions to Ask Your Doctor about Cataract Treatment

- What are the treatment options for the type of cataract that I have?

- What are the risks and benefits associated with each of these options?
- Which cataract treatment do you recommend? How will your recommended treatment affect my eyesight?
- Do you recommend cataract surgery? Why or why not?
- What does this procedure involve?
- Am I a good candidate for this type of cataract surgery? Why or why not?
- Will other eye problems or health conditions affect my cataract surgery?
- What are the benefits, risks, and possible complications of cataract surgery?
- Who will perform my cataract surgery?
- How should I prepare for the procedure?
- Will I undergo additional tests before surgery for cataracts?
- How long will the surgery take?
- What kind of anesthesia will be used during the surgery? Will I be asleep during the procedure?
- Will any of the medications that I take interfere with the anesthetic or the surgery in any way?
- Will I feel anything during the surgery? If so, what should I expect?
- How long will it take for me to recover from cataract surgery?
- What can I expect after the surgery?
- What possible complications might develop after the surgery?
- Are there any complication warning signs I should watch for?

- What should I do if I experience complications?
Telephone number to call:

- How can I help improve my rate of recovery?

- How long will it take for my eye to recover after cataract surgery?

- Can I continue my normal activities after I recover from the surgery? If not, when can I return to my normal activities?
Restrictions:

- Will it be possible for me to drive at night after I recover from cataract surgery?

- Will I have to wear glasses after cataract surgery? Will my current prescription change?

- How long do lens implants usually last?

- Is it possible for a cataract to recur after surgery?

- How often should I have follow-up examinations?

- What does follow up after cataract surgery involve?

- How often should I have eye exams after cataract surgery?

- Next Appointment
Doctor: _____ **Date:** _____ **Time:** _____

Notes/Additional Information