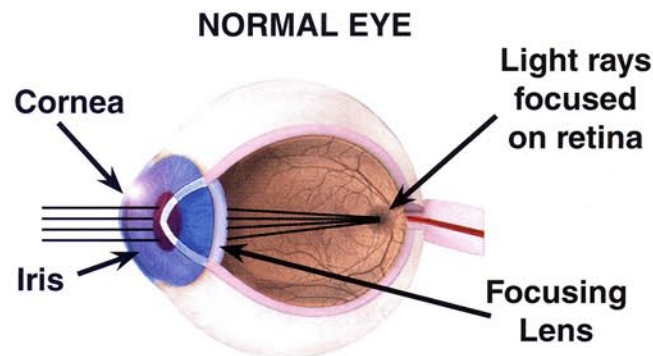


Cataracts are the leading cause of poor vision in adults. However, the development of cataracts does not have to mean a loss of sight. Treatment of cataracts is over 95% successful in restoring good vision.

Normal vision

The lens, which is responsible for focusing an image after it enters the eye, is normally crystal clear. When light enters the eye it passes through the lens and is focused on the retina at the back of the eye. The retina then transmits the focused image to the brain.

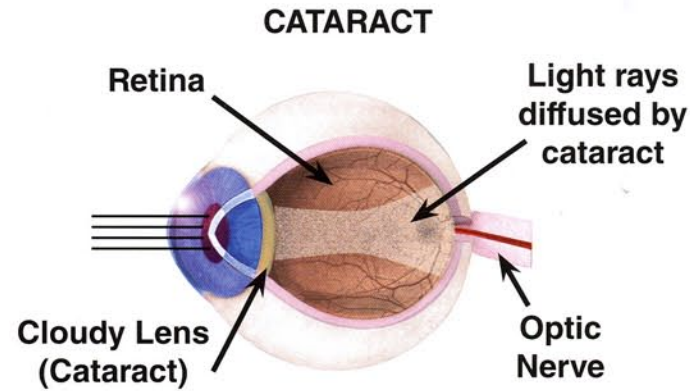


In normal vision, light passes through the lens to produce a clear image (below).



What is a cataract?

A cataract is the clouding of the eye's lens. The cloudy lens blocks the passage of light through the eye. As a result, the image that reaches the retina, and which is sent to the brain, is cloudy and vision is poor.



A cataract is a clouding of the lens of the eye which causes vision to be distorted and blurred.



What causes cataracts?

A cataract is caused by a change in the chemical composition of the lens. The most common cause for this change is the natural aging process. As we mature, the normally flexible, clear material of the lens becomes hard and cloudy. Unfortunately,

there is no way to prevent the development of cataracts. Everyone who lives long enough will eventually develop the problem.

Although most commonly seen in adults after the age of 40, cataracts can occur at any age. The condition may be present at birth or caused by an injury to the eye. Infections and other eye diseases, such as glaucoma and eye tumors, may cause the development of a cataract. Vision loss is usually gradual as a cataract develops.

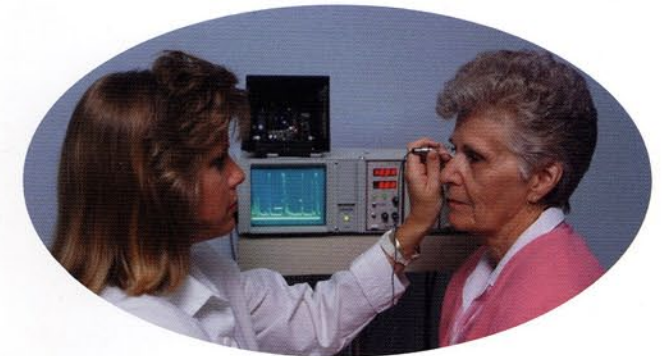
What are the symptoms of cataracts?

- Dimming or blurring of vision
- Halos or glare around lights
- Double vision
- Colors appear less brilliant
- Feeling of "film" over the eyes
- Frequent changing or cleaning of glasses
- Difficulty driving or reading

How are cataracts diagnosed?

Since a cataract is the clouding of the lens inside the eye, it is not readily visible and must be diagnosed during an eye examination. A variety of instruments, including an ophthalmoscope and a slit lamp, are used to determine the type, size and location of the cataract. These instruments illuminate and magnify the structures of the eye.

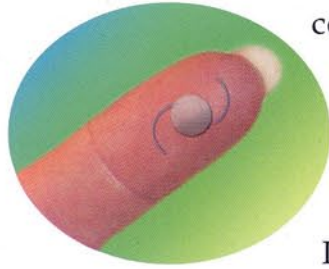
If a cataract is diagnosed, several other tests are performed. Contrast sensitivity or glare testing may be used to determine the degree of interference the cataract is causing with vision. The A-scan is an ultrasound test which is performed to determine the length of the eye and the power of the lens implant. Potential acuity measurement (PAM) could be used to determine how much vision might be improved. Other tests, like an endothelial cell count, may also be used depending on individual circumstances.



A series of tests are conducted to diagnose a cataract and determine how much vision can be improved with surgery.

How are cataracts treated?

Unfortunately, a cataract cannot be cleared by medication, eye drops or a change in diet. The only way to restore clear vision is to have the cloudy cataract lens surgically removed. After the cloudy lens has been removed, a replacement lens must be used to see clearly. This artificial lens can be in the form of cataract glasses,



contact lenses, or an intraocular lens implant (IOL). The most effective replacement lens used today is the IOL. It gives the patient a permanent focusing device for the eye which requires no care after surgical healing is completed.

When should cataract surgery be performed?

Development of the cataract itself is not an indication that immediate surgery is required. A cataract can be removed when loss of vision begins to interfere with daily activities.

Outpatient surgery

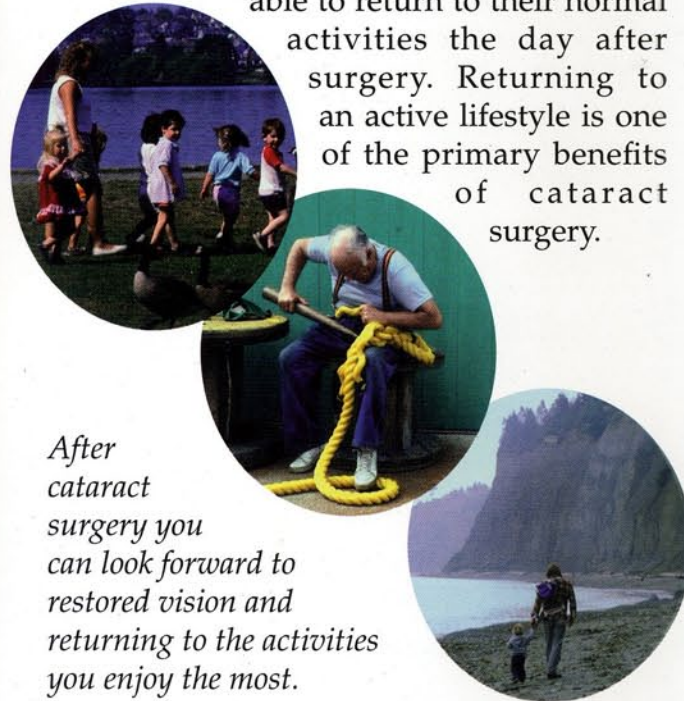
Before surgery, patients are given medication to help them relax, and an anesthetic to numb the eye and keep them comfortable during surgery. Most patients return home a few hours after the procedure with little or no need for pain medication

What results can be expected after cataract surgery?

Patients can expect a rapid return to good vision following cataract surgery. Today's modern surgical techniques and technology have made cataract surgery one of the most successful surgical procedures performed in the United States. Over 95% of patients report a return to good vision following cataract surgery. However, some

patients will need to wear glasses for reading and other activities following the procedure.

Since general anesthesia is normally not required, most patients experience a rapid recovery, returning home within hours. Although good vision usually returns quickly the eye tissues will take several weeks to heal completely. Most patients are able to return to their normal activities the day after surgery. Returning to an active lifestyle is one of the primary benefits of cataract surgery.



After cataract surgery you can look forward to restored vision and returning to the activities you enjoy the most.

Loss of sight can be prevented

Although there is no effective way to prevent the development of cataracts, loss of sight from the disease is largely preventable. With modern technology, cataracts can be removed and good vision restored. If you are experiencing the symptoms of cataracts or other vision problems, you should obtain a complete eye examination.

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Cataracts

A Clouding of the Eye's Lens
Causing Blurred or Distorted Vision



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