

We believe that healthy vision is an essential part of a healthy and active lifestyle.



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This pamphlet is not intended as a substitute for a medical examination by a qualified physician. For more detailed information about cataracts and cataract surgery, speak to your doctor.

Learn More About
**Cataract
Surgery**



Cataract Surgery

What is a Cataract?

Each day, your eyes act like a camera, using the lens to bring into focus the various images and words you see. A cataract develops when the clear lens of your eye gradually becomes cloudy, which can make your vision blurry and produce an increase in glare.



Normal Vision

Symptoms

Symptoms vary from person to person. However, common symptoms include blurred vision, light sensitivity, poor night vision, double vision in the affected eye, difficulty in seeing distances, and numerous changes in eyeglass prescriptions to accommodate changes in vision.



Vision with Cataract

Causes

While researchers have yet to determine the exact cause of a cataract, they speculate that several environmental factors influence cataract development. These factors include smoking, excess weight, trauma, steroid use, diabetes and excessive exposure to sunlight.

Cataract Prevention

If you stop smoking, maintain a healthy weight, wear sunglasses when out in the sun and take ocular vitamins designed to protect eyesight, you may reduce your risk of developing a cataract. Speak to your doctor to see how preventive measures can be a part of your health plan.

Treatment Options

To improve vision, the cataract is removed and an artificial lens (known as an intraocular lens, or IOL) is implanted to restore your vision. There are currently two types of IOLs available: the Lifestyle IOL, or a monofocal lens.



Artificial Lens (IOL)

Whether the Lifestyle IOL or a monofocal lens is chosen, the goal is to create the best possible vision suited for a person's lifestyle.

The Lifestyle IOL is similar to bifocal glasses, allowing the ability to see both near and far distances.

The *Standard Monofocal Lens* (covered by insurance plans) has the same prescription across the entire lens, like a regular pair of single-vision eyeglasses.

Did You Know?

More than 20 million Americans have impaired vision due to the presence of cataracts.

*Archives of Ophthalmology,
April 2004*

Learn The Risks and Benefits of Cataract Surgery

Before considering cataract surgery, it is important to understand the risks and benefits associated with any of these treatment options.

Possible complications include, but are not limited to, high pressure in the eye, infection, artificial lens damage or dislocation, drooping eyelid, retinal detachment, severe bleeding inside the eye, swelling or clouding of the cornea, loss of vision, or loss of the eye.

Benefits of cataract surgery will include improvement in the vision you need for everyday activities such as driving, reading, working, mobility, safety, hobbies, and social activities. The impact of surgery may lead to increased self-confidence and independence.

After Cataract Surgery

In some cases, the membrane that supports the IOL (the capsule) can become cloudy several months or years after the cataract was removed. This is called a "secondary membrane." If this occurs and blurs your vision, your ophthalmologist will make an opening in the center of the cloudy capsule with a laser to allow light to pass through the lens properly again.

This quick and safe procedure, called a posterior capsulotomy, takes about five minutes as an outpatient surgical procedure.