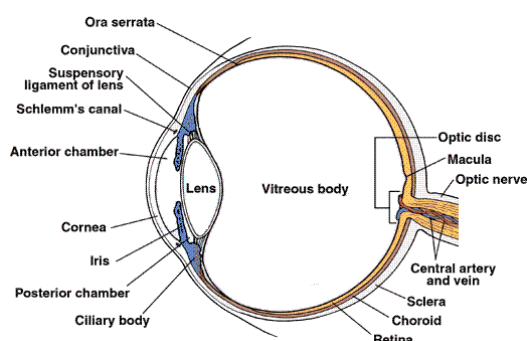


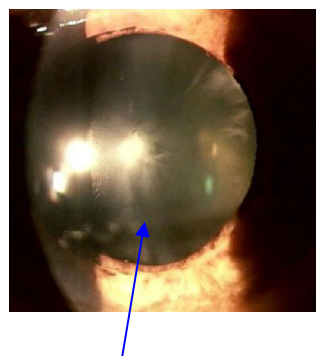
Cataract Surgery - Patient Information

What is a Cataract?

A cataract is a misting or opacity of the lens of the eye. It prevents light entering the eye properly, causing a loss of focus, glare and dim vision. Cataracts are caused by the body's ageing process, by injury, diabetes or some drugs.



A diagram of the eye showing the cornea, lens and retina.



An early cataract

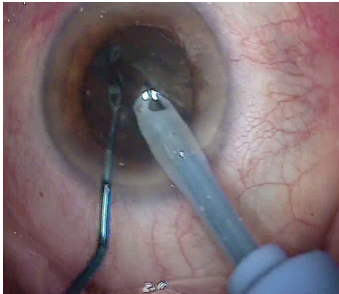
How can a Cataract be treated?

The only treatment for cataract is to have an operation. A small pen like probe is used to break up the old lens and to remove soft lens tissue. A new clear plastic lens is then inserted into the bag left by the old lens. This lens cannot be felt and remains in the eye for the rest of your life.

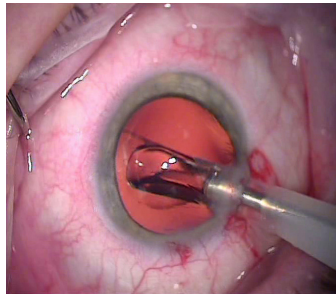
Which lens should I have?

There are several different types of lenses and the most appropriate lens will be chosen for your particular needs.

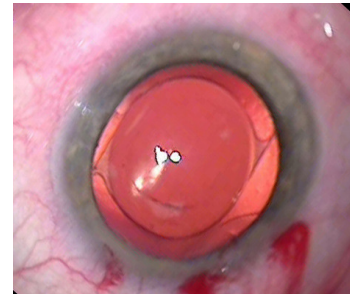
The cataract operation



The old lens
is broken up.



A new lens
is injected in.



The lens in place
at the end of the
operation

What about the anaesthetic?

Cataract surgery is now routinely done under topical anaesthetic (drops), you are awake, but the eye and the eyelids will be numbed, with a drop, you may feel a pressure sensation in the eye and a slight sting as anaesthetic is used in the eye.

What are the benefits?

Around 99% of patients have a significant improvement in vision following cataract surgery, helping driving, reading, working, hobbies, safety and self-confidence. However, sometimes other eye conditions mean that the results will not be as good as this. I will also try and remove the need for distance glasses following surgery.

What are the risks?

As with all surgery, cataract surgery carries with it risks. The most severe risk is of infection following the surgery. This occurs 1:1000 cases and can lead to a drop in vision permanently. You can tell if an infection develops, the eye becomes blurred, painful, and bloodshot. It usually occurs within 4 days of the surgery. It can be treated however emergency antibiotics are required, and you should contact the hospital as an emergency.

In about 1 / 100 operations the capsule of the lens may be broken leading to an increased risk of retinal detachment. This can be sorted out with another operation. Other complications include a rise in eye pressure, corneal or retinal swelling. The lens

capsule cloudy, causing misting of vision. Vision can be restored by laser treatment done as an outpatient procedure. There is permanent reduction of vision in about 1/100.

What are the Dos and Don'ts after the operation?

Do: Take the drops after the operation, four times a day until you are seen in clinic.

Do: Wear your shield at night, this is to stop you rubbing the eye when you are asleep.

Don't: Get the eye wet, e.g. don't wash your hair.

Don't: Rub the eye.

Don't: Drive, or lift heavy weights, or strenuous exercise for 2 weeks.

In general the eye is blurred for 24-48 hours following the surgery and then improves gradually over 2 weeks. You may find sunlight uncomfortable, dark glasses can help this.

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