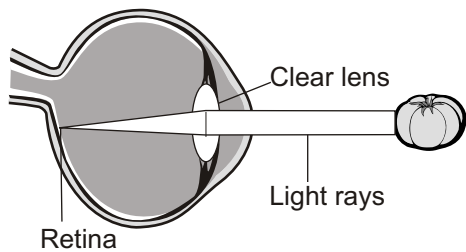


What is Cataract?

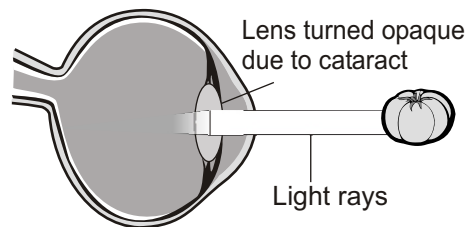
Normally, the lens of the eye is clear and allows light rays to pass through easily. When a cataract develops, the lens becomes cloudy and opaque. The light rays no longer pass through the lens easily, so the patient cannot see clearly.

In the normal eye, the light passes through the clear lens and focuses on the retina causing the eye to see a clear image



As seen through clear lens

As the cataract forms, the lens becomes opaque and light cannot be easily transmitted to the retina, thus causing a hazy image



As seen through cataractous lens

- Cataract is not a new growth or a film over the eye. In most cases, it is just part of the aging process.
- It is not contagious.

Types of Cataract

There are many types of cataracts. Changes in the chemical composition of the lens cause most cataracts. The following are the various types of cataracts.

Senile Cataract

This is the most common type of cataract, comprising 80 percent of the total cataracts. It occurs in patients above the age of 50.

Congenital Cataract

Cataracts in children are rare. They can be caused by infection of the mother during pregnancy, or they may be hereditary.

Traumatic Cataract

Eye injuries may cause cataracts in patients of any age.

Secondary Cataract

Diseases like glaucoma, iritis, eye tumours, and diabetes may cause cataracts.

Drug-induced Cataract

Prolonged treatment with steroid drugs, either for local (e.g., allergic conjunctivitis) or systemic diseases (e.g., asthma) may lead to cataract formation.

Symptoms

- Blurring or dimness of vision.
- Feeling of a film over the eyes.
- Sensitivity to light and glare.

Treatment

Cataract cannot be cured by medicines or spectacles. Removal of the clouded lens through surgery is the only treatment.

A cataract operation is a minor operation done with local anaesthesia. During the 15 minute surgery, the cataract lens is removed and replaced by either:

- Cataract eye glasses or
- Intraocular lens implant (IOL)

Intraocular Lens (IOL)

An IOL is a tiny transparent convex lens, made of polymethyl methacrylate, (a harmless plastic substance) inserted in the eye during surgery. Unlike contact lenses, an IOL stays permanently in the eye and does not cause irritation.

Advantages of IOL

- Since the lens is placed inside the eye, most often the patient need not wear glasses for distance vision, but sometimes patient has to wear glasses for clarity.
- Images are clear and of the same dimension without distortion.
- Full vision returns very early.
- Normal field of vision.

Types of Cataract Removal

Routine Method

A 10mm incision is made in the eye. The cataract lens is removed, and the opening is closed with sutures.

Phaco or Sutureless Surgery Method

A 3mm incision is made in the eye. The cataract lens is broken into small pieces by a machine with ultrasonic waves and removed with a needle. A specially prepared IOL is inserted into the eye and the wound heals without sutures.

Advantages of Phaco

- Early surgery can be done, so the patient need not wait for the cataract to mature
- Small incision
- No sutures (so no suture-related problems like irritation & watering)
- No need for suture removal
- Early return to work
- No need to continue eye drops for a long time
- No need for hospital stay. Even if the patient stays in the hospital, it is only for a short time
- Only one postoperative visit necessary
- Stable refraction after one month

If you or anybody in your family or neighbourhood has eye problems,

Do Not Delay

See an eye specialist immediately.

Remember

Only an ophthalmologist can provide total eye care: Medical, Surgical and Optical.

It's your sight!

Your eyes deserve the best care available!

It is the ophthalmic surgeon who makes the final decision on whether the patient can undergo phaco or not.



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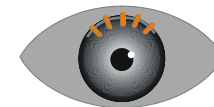
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