

How frequent should the eye examination be?

It should be once in 3 months for children less than 2 years of age, once in 6 months for children aged between 2 to 5 years and once a year for children more than 5 years of age.

Can normal vision be got back after cataract surgery?

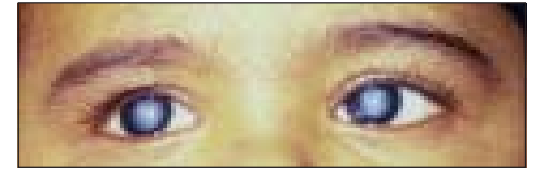
Age at the onset of cataract, time interval between the onset of cataract and surgery, regular meticulous use of glasses and the state of growth of the eyes and brain will determine the visual outcome following surgery.

Can nutritious food and vitamin tablets cure cataract?

No, they cannot.

*Surgery is the only solution.
The earlier the better to restore
normal vision. After cataract
surgery, spectacles is a must.*

Can children also develop Cataract?



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What is cataract?

Normally the lens inside the eye is transparent and allows light to pass through. Due to certain reasons this lens becomes opaque, allowing less light to pass through and gradually reducing the vision. This condition is called cataract.

Can children develop cataract?

Yes, Although cataract is normally associated with old age, significant number of children are born with cataract every year.

Effects of cataract in children

Maximum development of vision takes place in the first 2 years of life. For this normal development, light rays have to reach the retina inside the eye. But cataract blocks these light rays from reaching the retina leading to reduced vision and retarded development of vision. Surgery for cataract will not only improve vision but also prevent the development of amblyopia (lazy eye).

Signs

- Reduced vision
- White reflex seen in the central part of the eye
- Squint (crossed eyes)
- Abnormal eye movements (Nystagmus)

Reasons

- Hereditary
- Viral infections of the mother during pregnancy (eg. Rubella)

- Ocular or systemic steroids for long duration
- Injury to the eye/eyes

Treatment

Neither eye drops or tablets nor laser can cure cataract. Surgery is the only way to regain vision.

Timing of surgery

Once cataract is diagnosed surgery should be done as soon as possible. Earlier the surgery done, better will be the improvement in vision.

Types of surgery

- Removal of cataract and wearing either glasses or contact lenses.
- Removal of cataract and implanting an intraocular lens (IOL) inside the eye.

Choice of surgery

Age of the child, type of cataract, other associated eye problems, general growth of the child and ability of parents to comprehend the problem will determine the type of surgery opted for the child by the ophthalmologist.

Frequently Asked Questions

Should very young babies with cataract in both eyes undergo surgery immediately?

Yes, for all children less than 2 years of age with cataract in both eyes need to undergo surgery in both eyes over a short period of time preferably before 2-3 months of age.

Will a 2 month old baby be able to stand surgery?

Yes, medical science has developed such that, even a new born can undergo eye surgery under general anaesthesia without any problem. Children with cardiac, lung and brain problem should be examined by a paediatrician and anaesthesiologist before surgery.

Will the child need to wear glasses after surgery?

Yes, They must wear glasses. It is the duty of the parents to ensure that they wear the glasses comfortably and continuously.

Will young children wear thick glasses?

Children are basically very smart. Though they may initially resist, but once they realise that they can see well with the glasses, even a 6 month old infant will develop an affinity towards it.

Will the power of the glasses keep on changing?

After surgery, as the child grows the power of the glasses will keep on decreasing. So frequent eye examinations are essential.

