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Notes: Nurses can write personalized notes to patients here.

Cataract Removal

Definition

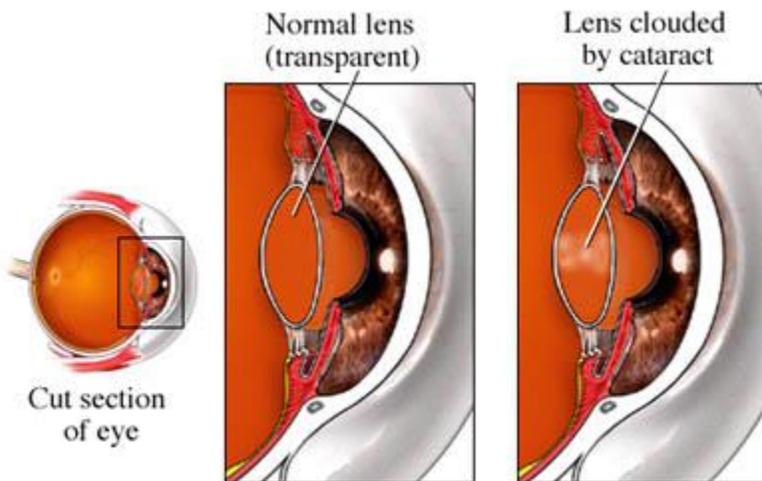
Cataract removal is a procedure to remove a [cataract](#). A cataract is a clouding of the eye's lens.

Reasons for Procedure

The lens of the eye is responsible for focusing images onto the back of the eye. It is normally transparent. With cataracts, the lens begins to cloud over time. This will gradually cause a loss in vision.

Cataract removal is done when the cataract causes problems with vision. The surgery improves vision.

Cataract



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Possible Complications

Problems from the procedure are rare, but all procedures have some risk. Your doctor will review potential problems, like:

- Inflammation
- Infection
- Damage to the eye
- Decreased vision
- Increased eye pressure
- [Detached retina](#)

- Droopy eyelid
- Need for more surgery

Some factors that may increase the risk of complications include:

- [Obesity](#)
- Smoking
- Diabetes
- Poor overall health
- Bleeding disorders
- Infection
- History of trauma to the eye

[What to Expect](#)

Prior to Procedure

The following may be done prior to the procedure:

- Complete eye exam
- An A-scan—a test using either sound waves or a laser to determine the strength of the replacement lens
- Administer eye drops
- Administer antibiotic injections

Anesthesia

Local anesthesia will be used. It will make the area numb.

Description of the Procedure

There are 2 main types of cataract removal.

Phacoemulsification Technique:

Most cataract removal surgeries are done using this technique. An ultrasound probe will break the cloudy lens into tiny fragments. A tiny incision will be made into the eye. The fragments will then be vacuumed out through the incision. A lens implant will be inserted to replace the affected lens. Stitches are often not needed. You may notice an improvement in your vision soon after surgery.

Extracapsular Technique:

An incision will be made in the eye. The cataract will be removed in one piece through the incision, along with the anterior capsule of the lens. The lens implant will be inserted to replace the affected lens. Because the incision will be larger, you will need stitches. The recovery will take longer with this technique.

After either procedure, a shield may be used over the eye while it heals.

How Long Will It Take?

The process takes less than 1 hour.

Will It Hurt?

Most people report no significant pain during the procedure. Pulling or pressure sensations during the procedure are normal.

Post-procedure Care

At the Care Center

The staff at the care center will provide eye drops. Another eye exam may be done.

At Home

It is not uncommon to have worse vision at first. Noticeable improvements in your vision will occur quickly, but every eye heals differently. One eye may heal more quickly or slowly than the other. Since each lens is individually fitted for each person, weaker glasses or contacts may be necessary.

Recovery at home may include:

- Adjusting activities until the eye is healed.
- Using an eye patch, eye shield, or UV-protecting sunglasses when you are outside.
- Follow your doctor's instructions.

[Call Your Doctor](#)

It is important to monitor your recovery. Alert your doctor to any problems. If any of the following occur, call your doctor:

- Signs of infection, including fever and chills
- Change in vision
- Redness, swelling, increasing pain, bleeding, or discharge from the affected eye
- Visual disturbances, such as double vision, flashes of light, floaters, part of the field of vision is missing, or eye pressure

If you think you have an emergency, call for medical help right away.

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