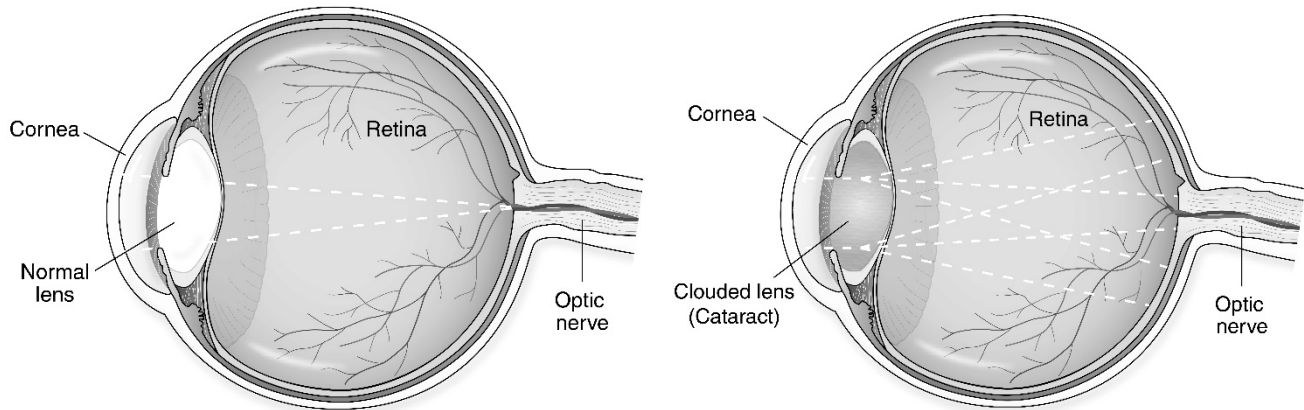


Standard Cataract Surgery for Adults



Light rays scatter when entering the eye through a cloudy lens causing/resulting in blurry vision.

A cataract is a clouding or opacity that develops in the natural lens of the eye. The lens is located just behind the iris, which is the colored part of the front of the eye. The primary job of the lens is to focus light to the back of your eye. A cataract can impair the quality of the image and reduce overall vision. Common symptoms of cataracts can be blurred vision, reduced night vision, glare and halos, dimming of vision, or ghost images.

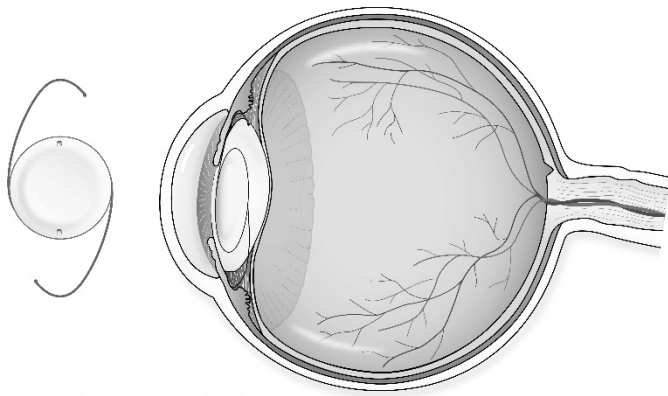
Cataract Surgery

Cataract surgery improves the overall quality of vision by removing the cloudy natural lens and replacing it with a clear artificial lens.

The surgery is most often done under local anesthetic. This means that you are awake during the procedure.

Typically, some light sedation will be used to help you relax during the procedure. The eye will be anesthetized at the time of surgery with special medication applied directly to the eye at the time of surgery.

The most common method of cataract surgery is called phacoemulsification. The ophthalmologist creates a small incision in the clear part of the eye to gain access to the cataract and perform the surgery. The actual cataract is removed by using an ultrasound instrument to break the lens into tiny pieces and then suction it out from the eye. A laser can also be used during the surgery to help facilitate the cataract removal. Once the cataract is completely removed the



Posterior chamber lens
(behind iris)

artificial lens will then be inserted into the eye via the initial incision.

The incision may seal by itself or may be closed with stitches if necessary. Usually, the eye is patched for at least 4 hours after the surgery or until the morning after surgery. Your ophthalmologist will give you specific instructions for your situation.

Before Surgery

Arrange for someone to help:

- Drive you to and from the surgery center.
- Stay with you during the first night after surgery.
- Drive you to your post-op visit.

The medication needed for the surgery will likely be sent to your pharmacy well ahead of the planned surgery. Pick up your eye drops **at least one week** before surgery and start using them as scheduled. Your ophthalmologist will determine the best medication regimen for your specific situation.

A focused medical exam is usually required prior to your actual cataract

surgery. This may also include blood tests, an EKG, or chest x-ray. Your ophthalmologist will talk to you about any medicines to stop taking while you prepare for surgery.

We will call you 1-2 days before surgery to tell you what time to arrive and when to stop eating and drinking.

Day of Surgery

- Bathe and remove all nail polish and make-up. Take off all jewelry, do not wear perfumes or deodorants.
- Bring a photo ID, insurance card, eye drops, eye drop schedule and this instruction sheet.

Shield and Drops

- You will have a shield on your eye after surgery. Your ophthalmologist will give you instruction when to remove. Usually the morning after surgery.
- Wear the shield when sleeping for 1 week after surgery. After the first night, you may sleep on either side. Wear dark sunglasses when outside as the eye might be more sensitive to light.
- The surgery center will tell you when to start the eye drop schedule.

Pain

It is normal to have a scratchy feeling in the eye for a couple of days after surgery. It may also feel like something is in your eye at times. Call your doctor if you have an ache that is not controlled with acetaminophen (Tylenol[®]) or if you have significant nausea or vomit.

Post Operative Activity

- Shower or bathe like normal but be careful not to get soap into your eyes. Be careful stepping in the shower.
- You may watch TV and read. You may need reading glasses. Often, an over-the-counter pair will work. You can discuss this with your doctor.
- No swimming or sitting in hot tubs for 2 weeks.
- No submersion of head under water for 2 weeks
- Be careful on stairs and do not drive until cleared by your doctor. You may have trouble with depth perception for a bit after surgery.
- Moderate exercise or sex will not harm the eye. Only light activity for 1 week. No lifting more than 25 pounds for 1 week. A good rule is that if it makes you “red in the face,” avoid it for one week.
- If you have had a Multifocal or Toric lens, no jumping or jolting activities (horseback riding or aerobics) for 2 weeks.
- Do not rub your eye for at least 1 month.
- Most people feel well enough to travel 2 days after their surgery. This includes air travel. We suggest that you do not travel to remote areas for 1 week after surgery.

Receiving Eyeglasses

- Most patients receive new eyeglasses 4-6 weeks after surgery, if needed. We need the eye to heal and the swelling to settle before you get new glasses, or the prescription might change.
- A doctor might suggest an over-the-counter pair of reading glasses to help during this time.
- If you have astigmatism, you may have trouble with your vision until you are fitted with glasses.
- If you have other eye diseases such as macular degeneration or glaucoma, you may have trouble with your vision even after your cataract is removed.

When to Call

- An increase in swelling or redness
- Any increase in pain or discharge from the eye
- A significant decrease in vision
- Nausea or vomiting
- Questions or concerns

Who to Call

Clinic staff can be reached Monday through Friday from 8:00 am until 5:00 pm. Closed on holidays.

UW Health University Clinic
2880 University Ave., Madison
(608) 263-7171

UW Health Deming Way Clinic
2349 Deming Way, Middleton
(608) 824-3937

UW Health E. Terrace Dr Medical Center
5249 E. Terrace Dr., Madison
(608) 265-1270

When the clinic is closed, call the paging operator at **(608) 262-0486**. Ask for the “ophthalmology resident on call.” Give your name and phone number with the area code. The doctor will call you back.

The toll-free number is:
1-800-323-8942.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 5/2024 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#4205