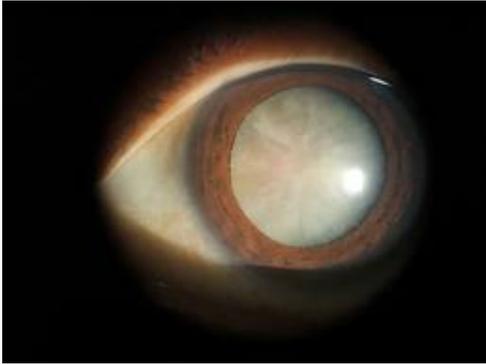


CATARACT

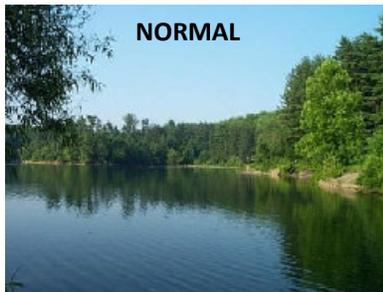
What is Cataract?



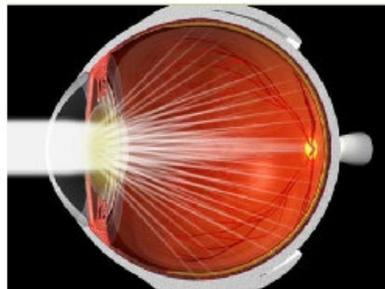
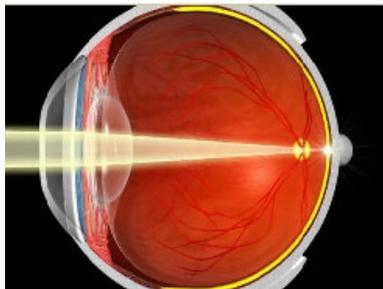
Cataract refers to the clouding of the naturally occurring lens inside your eye. It can develop in one or both eyes. One eye can often be more affected than the other.

How does cataract affect vision?

The crystalline lens is normally clear. It allows light to pass through to the back of your eye, helping you to see sharp images. If parts of the lens become cloudy (opaque), light cannot pass through the cloudy patches and vision gradually becomes hazy. The cloudier the lens becomes, the more your sight will be affected.



Cataracts are the main cause of impaired vision in the world, especially in developing countries. They affect men and women equally.



Cataracts are most commonly found in older people. These are called age-related cataracts.

cataracts.

Rarely, babies can have cataracts when they are born, referred to as congenital

What do you feel as cataract progresses?

- If your cataracts are mild, you may not notice any symptoms to start with
- Blurred, cloudy or misty vision is the most common symptom of age-related cataracts
- Difficulty to see in dim light or very bright light
- Glare from bright lights may be dazzling or uncomfortable to look at
- Glasses have become less effective
- Haloes around light

What causes cataract?

The causes of age-related cataracts are not known. Research suggests that some factors may increase the risk of developing cataract.

Changes to the lens in the eye

As people grow older, there can be changes in the lens protein in the eye resulting in clouding of the lens.

Risk factors

- a history of cataracts in your family
- lifestyle factors, such as smoking or a poor diet
- overexposing your eyes to sunlight
- using steroids long-term
- diabetes – cataracts develop at an earlier age
- injuries to the eye
- other eye conditions like uveitis (inflammation of the uveal tract in the eye)

What is the treatment?

Your ophthalmologist will recommend surgical treatment if your loss of vision affects your usual daily activities and one is not comfortable with spectacle correction.

Cataracts are treated by having an operation to remove the cloudy lens in your eye. Nowadays, in most cases, the natural lens is replaced with an artificial clear lens. This is called an intraocular implant or intraocular lens (IOL). This is placed inside the eye and does not need to be removed like contact lens. Postoperatively, spectacles are necessary for near vision and sometimes for distant vision. Spectacle dependency is less with multifocals.



What are the types of Cataract surgery?

The most common methods for removing cataracts include [Small Incision Cataract Surgery\(SICS\)](#) or [Phacoemulsification](#).

The techniques for removing cataract include :

Extracapsular Cataract Extraction (ECCE) : Here the cloudy lens is removed in a single piece through a 9-11mm incision. It is replaced with an artificial lens and the incision is closed with fine stitches. The surgeon may opt for this technique in cases where the cataract is very advanced. The recovery period is longer here.

Small Incision Cataract Surgery (SICS) : Here the cataract is removed through a scleral tunnel and an IOL is put inside the eye. This surgery usually does not require suturing and allows a speedy post operative recovery. Your eye will receive a cut of about 5.5 to 7 mm only. This is often referred to as 'micro' or manual phaco by common people.

Phacoemulsification : In this method a tiny ultrasound probe is inserted through a very small incision (about 2.8-3mm). The instrument uses ultrasound vibrations to break the cataract into fine pieces, which are gently suctioned out. The new foldable lens is then inserted into the eye. Usually no stitches are required to close the incision. This minimal surgery, lasting for 15-25min, allows faster and safer healing, hastening your return to normal activity.

The latest development in the field of Phacoemulsification is the development of **Micro Phaco** (Micro Incision Cataract Surgery/MICS) which has reduced the incision to less than 2 mm

In most cases, cataract surgery does not require overnight stay. It is usually performed as a "Day Care" procedure wherein the patient comes in for surgery after having put some antibiotic drops in his eyes over the last 1-3 days.

