

A Guide to Preparing for Your Cataract Surgery

A patient-friendly booklet for: _____

This booklet is to help you understand and prepare for your surgery.

This document was developed with the members of the Department of Ophthalmology and the MUHC-McGill University Ocular Pathology & Translational Research Laboratory.

We would like to recognize Dr. Jacqueline Coblenz for her support throughout the development of this booklet.

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Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the MUHC Patient Education Committee for their support in funding the production and publication of this document through the Patient Education Grant program.

Thanks to the team at the Patient Education Office for their support throughout the development of this booklet, the design and the layout, as well as for the creation of all the images.



IMPORTANT: PLEASE READ

Information provided in this booklet is for educational purposes. It is not intended to replace the advice or instruction of a professional healthcare practitioner, or to substitute medical care. Contact a qualified healthcare practitioner if you have any questions concerning your care.

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A special message for you and your family

We have designed this booklet for you based on our experience and what patients and families have told us. You'll find important information about your surgery, how to prepare and how to play an active part in your recovery.

By following the instructions in this booklet (e.g. include instructions specific to post cataract care), you can help prevent health problems after your surgery. You are also more likely to heal sooner and feel better faster.

Please review this closely and bring it with you on the day of your surgery. Use it as a guide while you are in the hospital. Our team can also review it with you before you go home.

Having surgery can be stressful for patients and their families. We hope that this booklet will help prepare and guide you. Speak to us if you have questions.

We will also be there each step of the way.



*Your cataract treatment team
McGill University Health Centre*



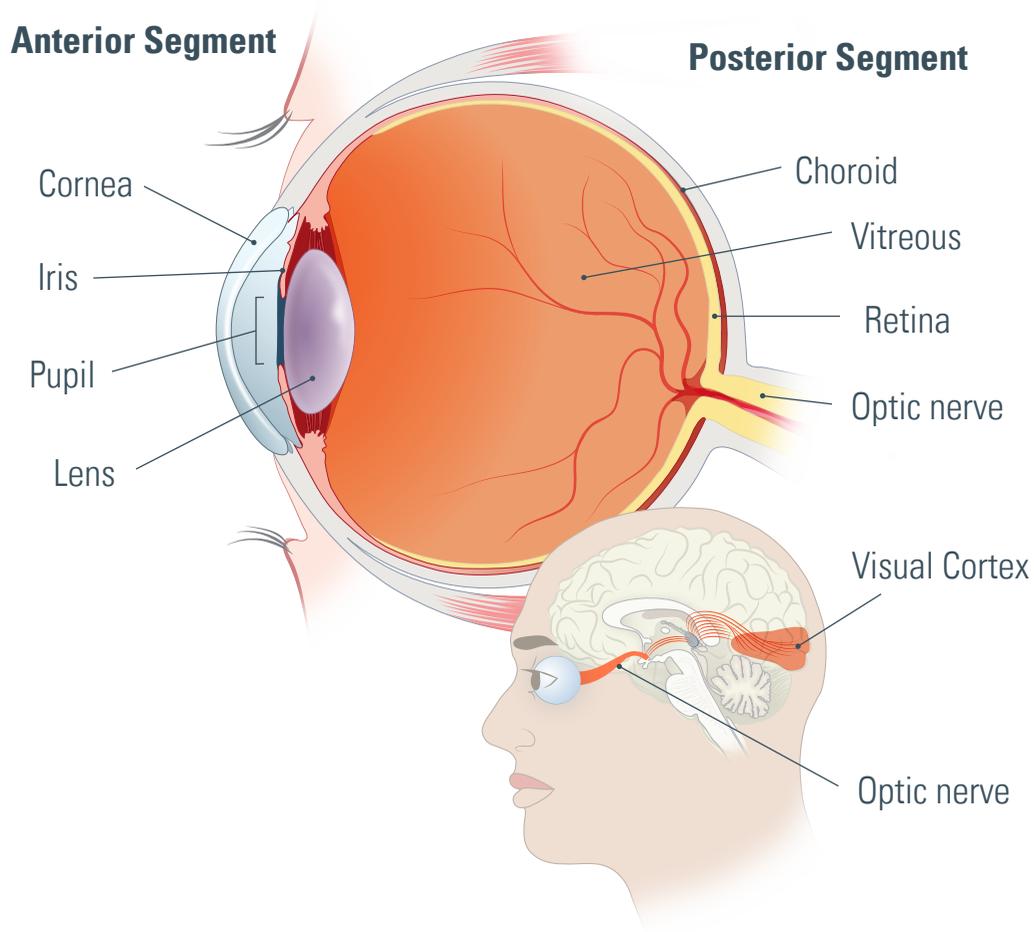
This booklet will help you understand your surgery, tell you what to expect and show you how to take proper care of your eyes. Cataract surgery always comes with special instructions about eye care and what eye medications to take. Your doctor will explain which medications to take before and after your surgery.

Remember, it is extremely important to keep taking your eye drop medicine and any other medications that are prescribed by your doctors. This is so that your eye can heal properly. Please follow the instructions in this booklet. Ask questions if you are not sure of anything.

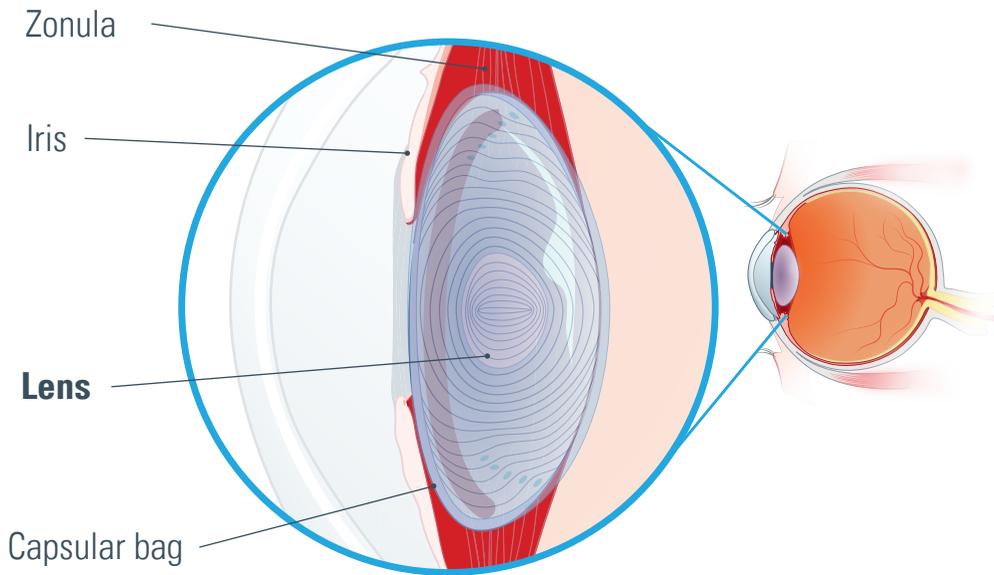
Your eye and how you see

Your Eye

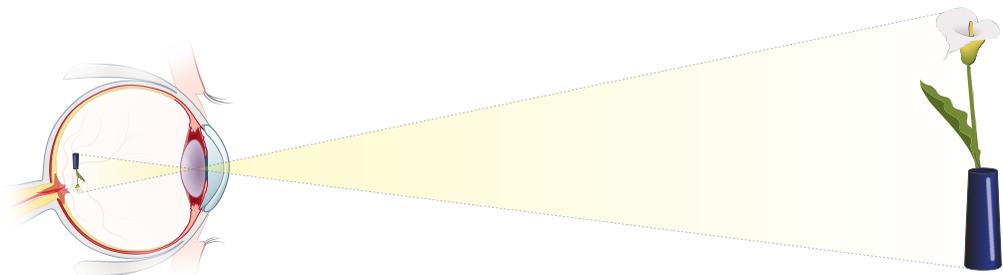
Your eye is made up of many parts to help you see. At the front, there is a cornea (a transparent film), iris (colored part), pupil (middle black part) and then your lens. At the back, the retina helps to send images from the optic nerve to your brain



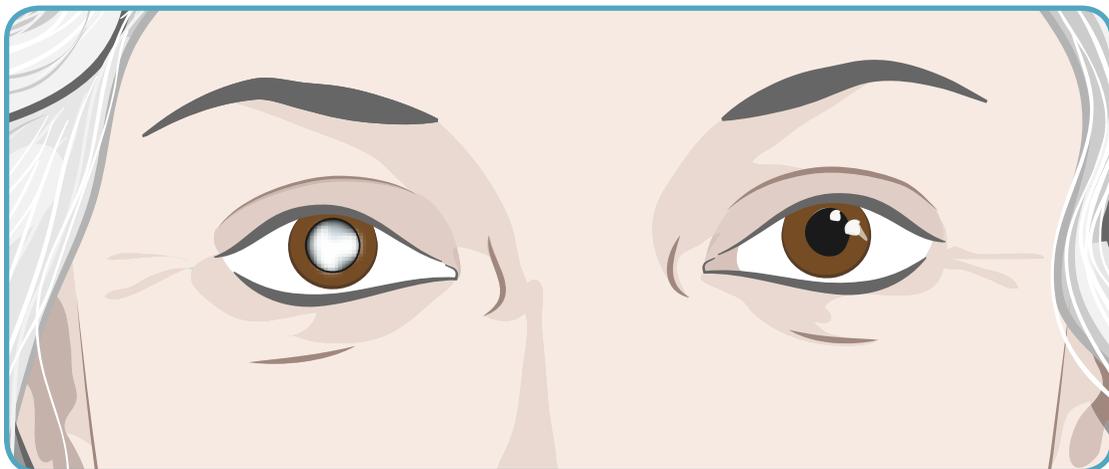
How does your eye see?



When light enters your eye, the lens focuses the light rays into one point on the back of the eye, called the retina. This creates an image that we see, just like a camera.



What are cataracts?



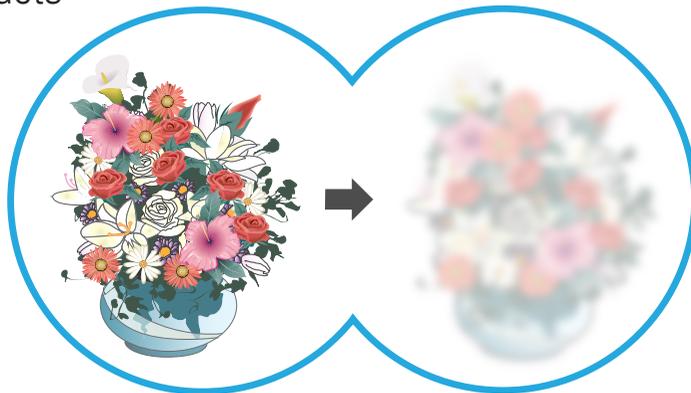
When your lens is no longer clear anymore, we call this a cataract.

How do cataracts develop?

The lens of your eye is mainly made up of water and protein. These proteins are normally arranged so that light can pass through easily. As we get older, these proteins naturally become re-arranged and bunched up. When the proteins are bunched up this way, light cannot pass through as well. Your lens becomes cloudy.

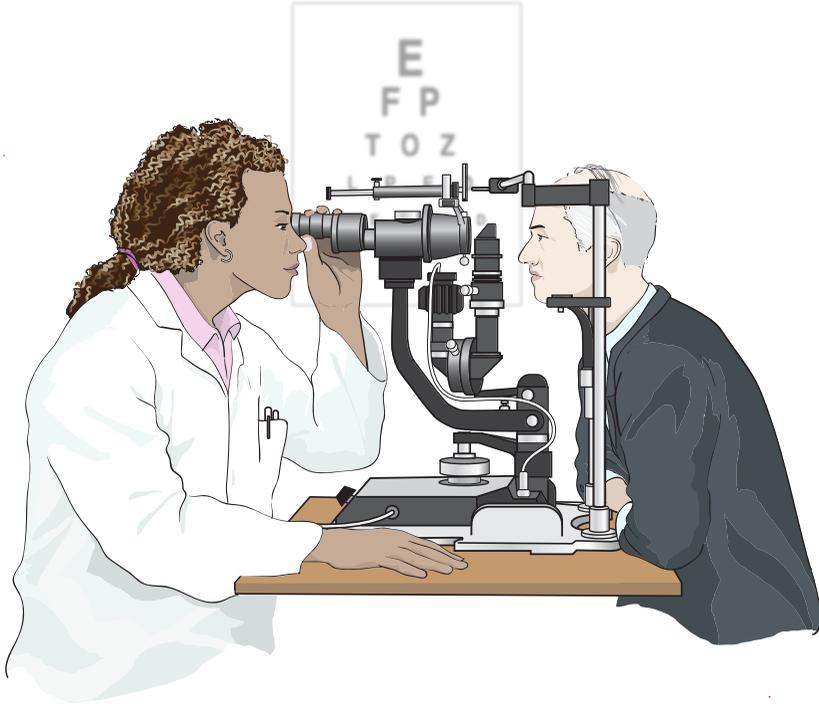
The main reason for cataracts is aging but cataracts can also develop because of:

- Ultraviolet radiation from sunlight
- Diabetes
- Eye injury



How are cataracts diagnosed?

Your eye doctor (also called an ophthalmologist) will check for cataracts with a regular eye exam.



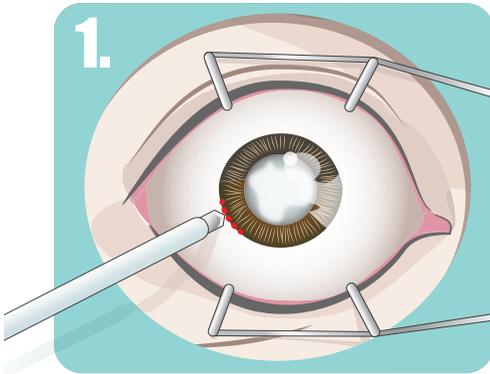
During the eye exam they will:

- Measure how well you see (normal vision is 20/20).
- Look at the lens of your eye very carefully with a special lamp.
- Measure how much light can pass through your lens.
- Check if your retina is healthy.
- See if you have any other eye problems.
- Recommend surgery if a cataract is diagnosed, and your vision is 20/40 or worse.
- Test to find the right lens for you.

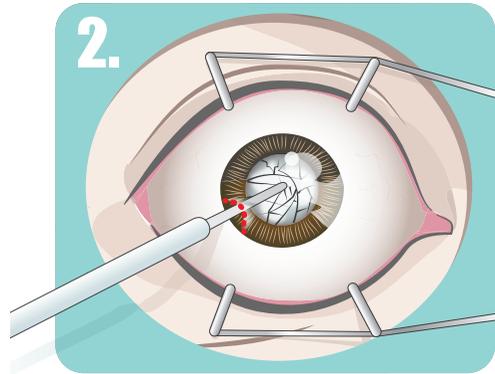
What is cataract surgery?

Surgery is the only treatment for cataracts. Since it is not an emergency, you and your surgeon can find the best time for your surgery.

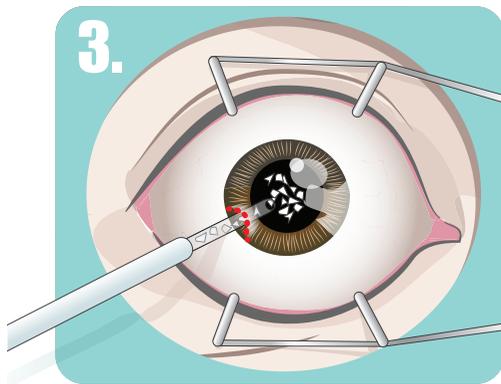
During the surgery, your surgeon will:



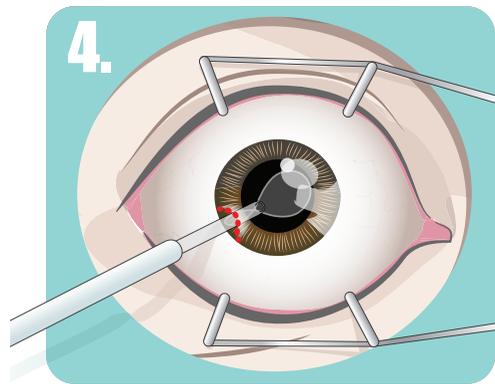
1. Make a small cut on the cornea.



2. Gently break the cataract up into small pieces with ultrasound waves using a special pen-like tool (phacoemulsification).



3. Remove the cataract pieces from the eye by carefully vacuuming them up.



4. Replace the cataract with a new, clear lens.

Common Questions:

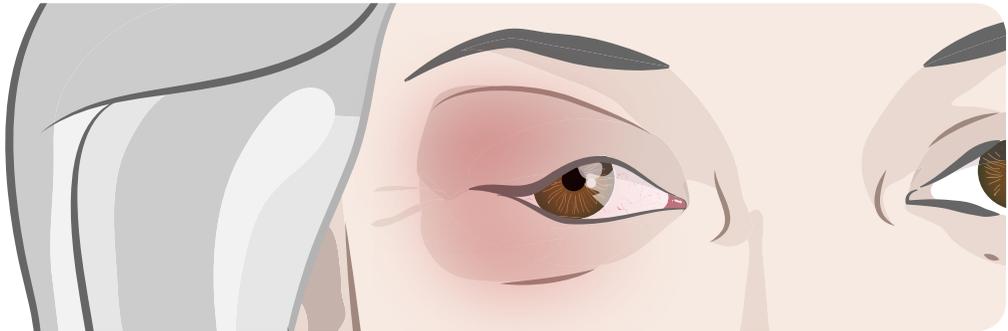
What are the risks and benefits of this surgery?

Cataract surgery is a common procedure that is quite safe. Most patients see better after they get their new lens.

However, as with any surgery, there is a small chance that you might have some problems.

These problems can include:

- Eye infections
- Increased pressure in the eye.
- Reaction to the anesthesia medication used.



Signs of a reaction can be swelling around the eye or a rash on your skin.

* Your surgeon will talk to you about these risks and what each of these means for you. Before your surgery, we will ask you to sign a consent form. By signing this, you confirm that you:

- agree to have a cataract surgery
- understand the risks and benefits involved



If I have two cataracts, will both be removed at the same time?

No. Your surgeon will recommend surgery on only one eye first. After your eye has healed completely, your ophthalmologist will schedule you for your next cataract surgery.

Will I need to wear glasses after surgery?

Some people still need to wear glasses after surgery. Your eyes will be retested 6-8 weeks after surgery and a new prescription will be given to you if you need it.

Speak with your eye doctor to find out more.

Will I need to change my eye medications?

Your eye surgeon will discuss which eye medications to continue and which new ones to take. We will review everything with you before your surgery. To help your eye heal properly, it is **EXTREMELY** important to follow these instructions carefully. If you have any questions, please ask.

I am taking medications for other health issues. Do I need to stop them before the surgery?

In most cases, you will need to continue taking your regular medications. Please tell your surgeon about all the medication you take. Also, tell your surgeon if you have any allergies to medication or food. Always let the team know about any special questions or concerns you may have.

How long will my new lens last?

Once a new lens is in place it will be permanent. It does not usually need to be replaced.

How long will it take for my eye to heal?

Your eyesight will probably be blurry for a few days, but should get better with time. Most people are completely healed after 6 weeks.

How can I prevent cataracts?

We do not know for sure if cataracts can be prevented or not.

Some research studies show that eating certain food can help to reduce the chance of getting cataracts. Here is a list of foods that have healthy nutrients for your eyes:

- Green leafy vegetables have lutein and zeaxanthin
- Citrus fruits and berries have vitamin C
- Almonds and spinach have vitamin E
- Fish have omega-3 fatty acids



 Wearing sunglasses with protection against ultraviolet light is also helpful.

Preparing for your surgery:

Cataract surgery is performed as a Day Surgery. This means that you will come to the clinic on the day of your surgery and will return home after a few hours.



* You will need to have a friend or a family member who can bring you home and stay with you for the first 24 hours after surgery.

If someone is not able to stay with you, we cannot perform the surgery. It will be cancelled and rescheduled when you have someone available. If you have questions or concerns about this, please speak with your eye care team.

Plan ahead to make sure everything is ready for you when you go home after your surgery. You will probably need some help at first from friends or family, with meals, laundry, and cleaning.





In order to get the best possible results, please also follow these instructions:

3 days or more before your surgery

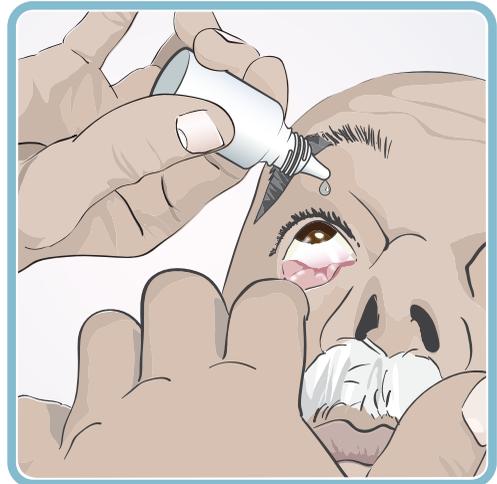
Take your eye drops as instructed. Starting them before surgery helps your eyes to recover more quickly. The eye drops will help to:

Decrease redness and swelling:

- Steroid drops
(Pred Forte, Durezol)
- Anti-inflammatory drops
(Ketorolac, Prolensa, Nevanac)

Prevent eye infections:

- Antibiotic drops
(Besivance, Vigamox, Zymar)



If you have been given a prescription for eye drops, you will need to follow these special instructions. No matter which eye drops you use, follow these instructions to make sure your eye gets the right amount of medicine:

- **Schedule for taking eye drops (see page 30).**
- **How to insert eye drops (see page 28).**



Call us...

if you have the flu, a cold, infection, eye infection or fever 1-2 days before surgery (or the day of).

We might need to reschedule your surgery.

.....
(Monday to Friday (___AM - ___PM))



1 day before surgery

- **Continue taking your eye drops.** Your doctor will advise you which medication you should take.
- Follow your doctor's instructions for what to eat and drink the night before.
- The clinic will contact you to confirm the time of your appointment.
- **Plan ahead;** make sure everything is ready for you when you go home after your surgery.
- **Arrange a ride** to and from the hospital.
- **Plan what to bring** in the morning.
- **Do not smoke and do not drink** alcohol 1 day before, the day of and 1 day after your surgery.



Surgery day

Before you leave home

- Your doctor will advise you which medication you should take the morning of your surgery.
- Continue taking your eye drops. Your doctor will advise you which eye drops you should take the morning of your surgery.
- Do not smoke or drink alcohol on the day of your surgery.
- Follow your doctor's instructions for what to eat and drink the night before.

What should you bring?

Remember to have someone to bring you to the clinic and take you home.

Where you should go?

.....
.....

Who will perform your surgery?

Your surgery will be done by your **ophthalmologist** with the help of **a nurse** and **an anesthesiologist** (a doctor who gives you medication so you do not have pain during the surgery).



What happens just before the surgery?



The nurse will put drops in your eye. One eye drop will make your pupil (the middle, black part of your eye) bigger and will help your ophthalmologist see your eye better to perform the surgery.

A second eye drop will help prevent infection. Since these drops can make your eyesight blurry and it takes about 6 hours for the eye drop medication to wear off, it is really important to have someone take you home after the surgery.

What happens during surgery

A member of our treatment team will give you medicine to help prevent pain (local anesthesia) and to relax you. You will be awake and will be able to hear machines beeping and people talking but you will not feel any pain.

During the surgery, you will be lying down. A thin cover will be placed on your face with a round opening over the eye that you will have the surgery on.

During your surgery, your surgeon will insert the new lens that was chosen for you.

This will replace the old, cloudy lens (cataract). The entire procedure takes about 20 minutes.

A patch will be placed over your eye at the end of the surgery.

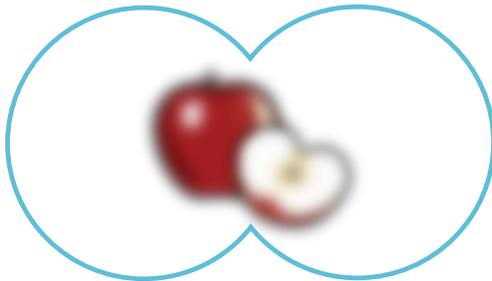


After the Surgery

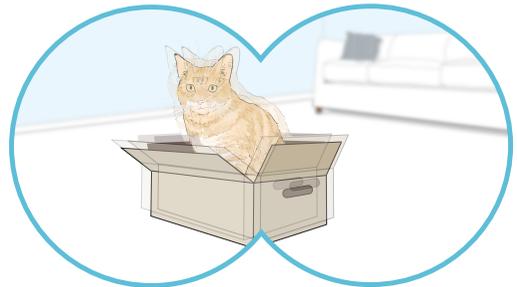
After the surgery, you will go to a recovery area. You will have a patch covering the eye where you had the surgery.

How will I feel immediately after the surgery?

You might:



- See blurry



- See double



- Make a lot of tears (crying)
- Feel like there is something in your eye



These feelings can last for a couple of weeks but with each will get better with time.

When will I be able to go home?

It is important to have someone to accompany you to the hospital and help you get back home the same day.



Please Note: Your surgery will be cancelled if you do not have someone to take you home and stay with you for the first 24 hours.

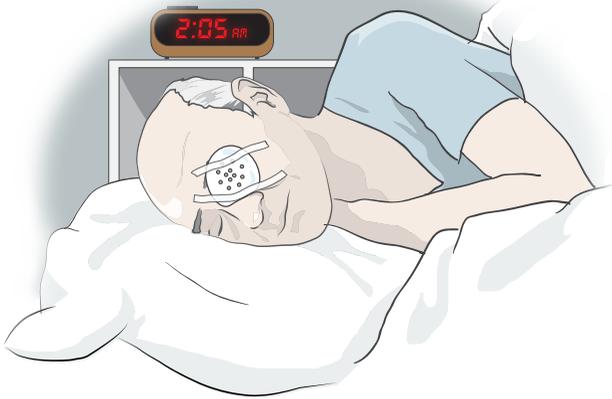
What to expect after the Surgery (at home)

You might have a feeling of discomfort around your eye or a slight headache. If so, taking a regular dose of Tylenol™ can help.



For your eye to heal properly, you must follow all the instructions in this booklet.

Most of the instructions are to prevent infection in your eye and to make sure your new lens stays in place and heals completely.



You will get an eye shield, a hard plastic eye cover, to protect your eye only when you sleep. Use medical tape to hold the eye shield in place.

Your surgeon will give you a prescription for eye drops. **These MUST be followed precisely.** If you have an eye patch after surgery, you will only start the drops once the surgeon tells you to.



Restart all the regular medications you took before surgery unless your doctor tells you not to.



Always wash your hands before touching your eyes.

Do not rub your eye for at least one month after surgery.



Things you can and cannot do

Your surgeon will tell you when you can return to your normal activities. The healing process usually takes up to six weeks.

The day after

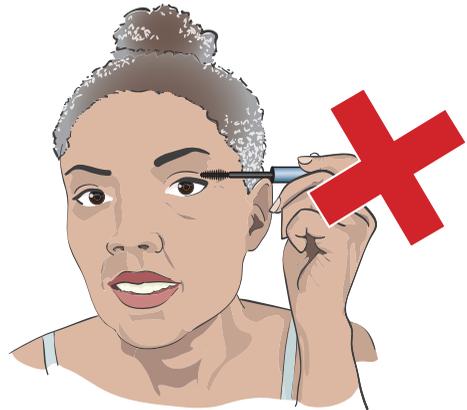
- You can shower and wash your hair the day after surgery (but do not get soap in the eye for at least 1 week).
- Wear your old glasses or sunglasses if you feel more comfortable with them.



- You can watch TV, read or go for walks.
- You can go back to your regular diet after surgery.

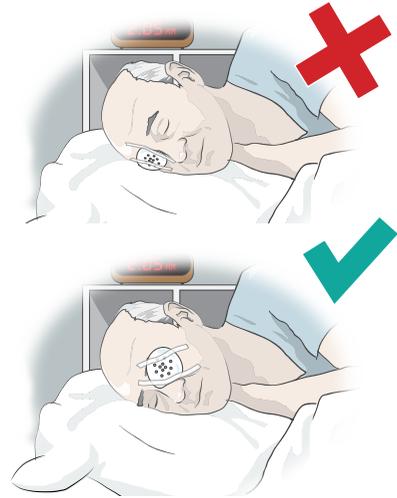
Up to 1 week after

- Do not wear eye make-up for at least 1 week.



Up to 2 weeks after

- Do not sleep on the operated side for at least 2 weeks.
- Do not lift anything over 10 lbs (4.5 kg) for at least 2 weeks.



Up to 3 weeks after

- Do not go swimming for at least 3 weeks.

Up to 4 weeks after

- Do not participate in heavy activities (like lifting boxes or shoveling snow) or play rough contact sports for at least 4 weeks or until your surgeon tells you it is safe to do so.



6 weeks or more

Your eyes will be retested 6 - 8 weeks after surgery. If you need a new prescription, you will get one during that appointment.

Other things to think about after surgery

In most patients, your eye will heal 6 weeks after surgery. We will schedule a follow-up appointment to make sure that you are healing well. In the meantime, follow the instructions in this booklet.

It is important to keep taking the eye drop medicine and any other medications that are prescribed by your doctors.

When do I contact the clinic?



Contact the clinic if you experience one or more of the following symptoms:

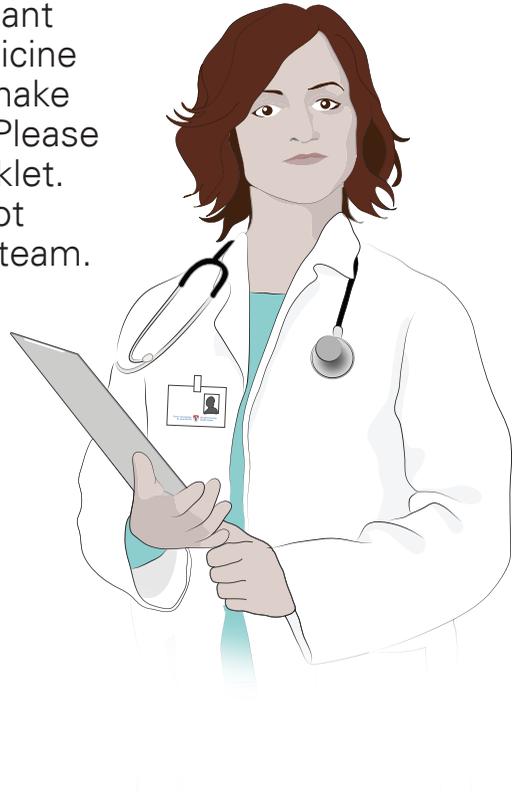
- Redness that is increasing over the days instead of decreasing.
- Sudden decrease in your vision.
- Eye pain that is getting stronger.
- Any discharge in the operated eye.
- Changes in the visual field and/or flashes of light.

.....
(Monday to Friday (___AM - ___PM))



Final Comments

Remember, it is extremely important to keep taking your eye drop medicine and to follow our instructions to make sure your eye can heal properly. Please follow the instructions in this booklet. If there is anything that you are not sure about, ask a member of our team. We are here to help.

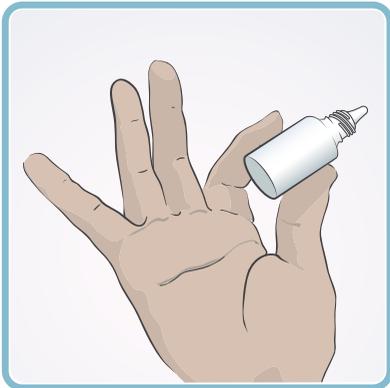


How to insert eye drops



Wash your hands.

1



Hold your eye dropper
between your thumb and
first finger.

2



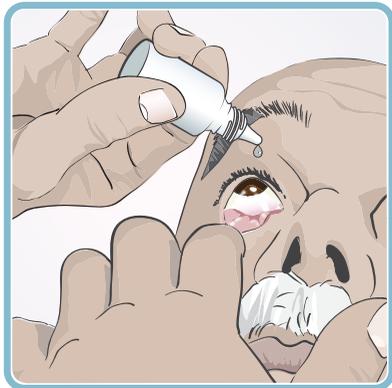
Tilt your head back.

3



Look up while you pull your lower eyelid down to create a pocket.

4



Gently squeeze the dropper until one drop at a time pools under your lower eye lid.

5



Keeping your head tilted, close your eyes to let the drops flow across your eye.

Only use disposable tissues to dry any excess.

6



Your eye drop schedule

✓ DROPS BEFORE SURGERY

Medications	3 days	2 days	1 day	Day of Surgery
..... x / day	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>			
..... x / day	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>			

✓ DROPS AFTER SURGERY



		Week 1 (Day 1 - 7) Put one drop from each bottle into the affected eye 4 times per day.						
		day 1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Bottle #1	(steroid)	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Bottle #2	(steroid)	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
		Week 2 (Days 8 - 14) Put one drop from the steroids (group #2) into the affected eye 3 times per day						
Bottle #2	(steroid)	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
		Week 3 (Days 15 - 21) Put one drop from the steroids (group #2) into the affected eye 2 times per day						
Bottle #2	(steroid)	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
		Week 4 (Days 22 - 28) Put one drop from the steroids (group #2) into the affected eye 1 time a day.						
Bottle #2	(steroid)	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

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