



The gift of **Sight**

We rely on our eyes to drive, to read, to watch television and to see the faces of our loved ones.

But many of us find our vision unnecessarily clouded by cataracts—the leading cause of poor vision among adults in the United States. Fortunately, restoring vision dimmed by cataracts is a reliable and nearly painless procedure. Most people have an excellent chance of regaining good vision and resuming normal daily activities with the help of cataract surgery.

Recent developments make cataract surgery recovery easier ...

- With modern anesthesia techniques, the surgery is comfortable and your vision may return quickly.
- The actual operation usually takes less than 30 minutes.
- New techniques allow the use of a smaller incision to remove the cataract and insert the replacement lens that restores vision. This makes surgery safer and healing time shorter than surgeries with larger incisions.
- Flexible, foldable lens implants can restore vision permanently and eliminate the need for the larger incision required for rigid plastic lens implants.

Cataracts: symptoms, evaluation and treatment

A cataract clouds the normally clear lens of the eye, which means your vision is dimmed or blurred. A person might notice the problem at any time as the cataract develops. Patients often describe what they see as a film or fog clouding their eyesight. Some people see a glare or halo that appears to surround familiar objects exposed to bright light. As the cataract grows, eyesight may eventually become completely blocked.

Patients

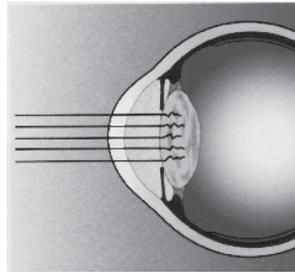
Most cataract patients are older, but younger people may also develop cataracts. In younger patients, the problem is usually caused by eye trauma, diabetes, heredity, or some medications.

Cataract development

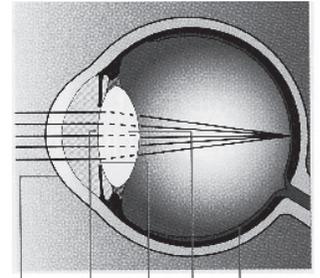
A cataract is not a film or skin that grows over the surface of the eye. A cataract occurs when the lens within the eye hardens and becomes clouded. Cataracts develop independently in each eye and might appear in only one eye or in both eyes at the same time.

Cataracts prevent light from passing through the lens to the back of the eye, or retina. Much like the lens of a camera focuses light on the film, the lens of your eye focuses light on the retina. If the front of a camera's lens becomes dirty or fogged, then the picture taken will be hazy or blurred. A cataract causes the light focusing on the retina of your eye to be blurred in the same manner.

**Light ray
blocked by cataracts.**



**Light rays focused
in a normal eye.**



Seeking help

When should you see a doctor about cataracts? It really depends on your own needs. If you experience one or more symptoms of cataracts, and your decreased vision is interfering with your normal daily activities, consult an eye specialist at FHN Ophthalmology. After a thorough examination, you and your ophthalmologist can decide if cataract surgery is appropriate for you.

Do you notice any of these symptoms of cataracts?

- Blurred or hazy vision
- Double vision in one eye
- Color change in pupil from black to white or yellowish tint
- Difficulty driving at night
- Difficulty seeing road signs
- Difficulty with sewing or any detail work
- Difficulty seeing print that once was easy to read
- Difficulty seeing faces across a room or street

If you have concerns about your vision, call 815-599-7785. We can help you get the care you need!



Cataract surgery is an outpatient procedure covered by insurance. Patients spend two to three hours in the hospital preparing for surgery and usually leave about an hour after the surgery. The surgery takes less than 30 minutes, is one of the safest types of surgery and is performed on almost one million patients each year. Cataract surgery today is 97 percent successful in significantly restoring vision.

Cataracts do not recur; however, future laser treatments may be necessary to remove clouding of a membrane. This procedure is explained further in our cataract preoperative information.

Restored vision

After surgery

Cataract surgery is almost always done on an outpatient basis, allowing you to return to most normal activities with just a few restrictions.

The first few days after surgery, your vision may be fuzzy. Over the next month, the healing process improves your vision. When your eye is healed you may get glasses to fine tune your vision.

If you have any concerns about your vision, contact FHN Ophthalmology. No one should have to suffer with poor vision because of a cataract when treatment options are quick, cause little discomfort, and often restore eyesight within minutes. Don't wait. The gift of sight is our most precious gift.

Treatment

The only cure for a cataract is surgery. A lens clouded by a cataract can be removed and replaced with an artificial lens implant safely and with little discomfort.

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Cataract surgery

In recent years, doctors have found many ways to improve cataract removal and placement of the artificial lens implant. As a result, patients heal faster and have little pain and low risk of complications. FHN makes the procedure safe, fast and gentle to the eye in a number of ways.



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