



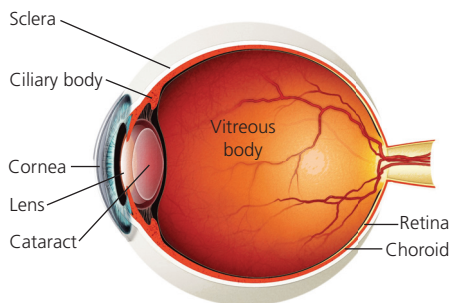
Cataract Surgery and IOL Implants

What is a cataract?

A cataract is an eye disease in which the clear crystalline lens of the eye becomes cloudy opaque, causing diminished vision. Cataracts are extremely common, and most cataracts are a result of the aging process.

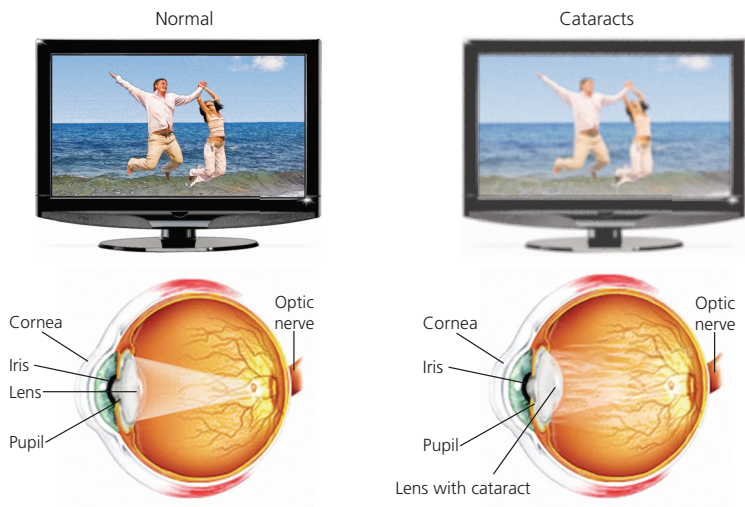
Although many cataracts are not significant enough to require treatment, surgical removal of cataracts is usually safe and effective, resulting in the improvement of vision in a normal eye, and letting light pass through the transparent lens to the retina. The lens must be clear for the retina to receive a sharp image. If the lens is cloudy from a cataract, the image striking the retina will be blurry resulting in blurry vision. The extent of the visual disturbance is dependent upon the degree of cloudiness of the lens.

Cataract surgery should be performed when the visual loss from the cataract significantly impacts the lifestyle of the individual patient.



What are the signs and symptoms of a cataract?

A cataract does not routinely cause discomfort or pain in the eye or alter the external appearance of the eye.



The disease is symptomless in the early stages. As the same advances, symptoms like decrease in clarity of vision, which is not fully correctable with glasses, are seen. There is a loss of contrast sensitivity, and so shadows and colour vision are less vivid. Disturbing glare may be noted, as light let into the eye is scattered by the cataract. Haloes may be observed around lights. Night vision will be reduced. In certain types of cataracts, double vision may be noted in the affected eye. Some patients may require frequent changes in their eyeglass or contact lens prescriptions and may be aware that their near vision is improving as their distance vision declines.

The eye will appear normal unless the cataract is mature and white. In that situation the pupil of the eye, which normally appears black, will look grey or white to the observer. There will be diminished visual acuity in the affected eye or eyes. This visual loss is not fully corrected by a change in the glasses. The lens of the eye can be easily examined by an ophthalmologist and the changes in the lens characteristic of cataract can actually be seen using a slit lamp, which is an illuminating and magnifying device used to painlessly examine the structures within the front of the eye, including the lens.

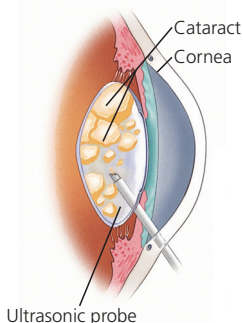
What is the treatment?

Cataract surgery is done under local or general anaesthesia. You may also be given additional medication to help you relax. Once you are anaesthetised, an incision is made in your eye. The size of the incision depends on the procedure used to remove the lens. The most common methods are phacoemulsification and extracapsular extraction. Both procedures reserve the posterior capsule.

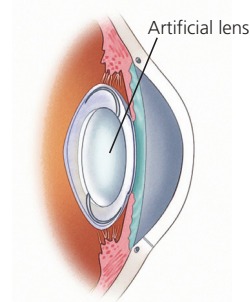
Phacoemulsification

After a small incision is made, an ultrasound probe is inserted. Sound waves from the probe break the cloudy lens into tiny pieces, which are then suctioned out. No stitches are needed after the procedure.

(a). Lens is broken into small pieces and removed

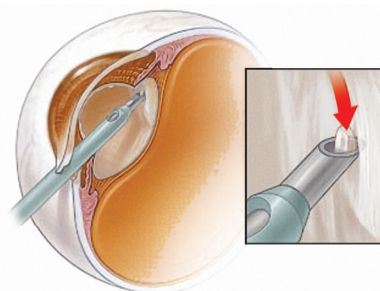


(b). Artificial lens is placed in eye



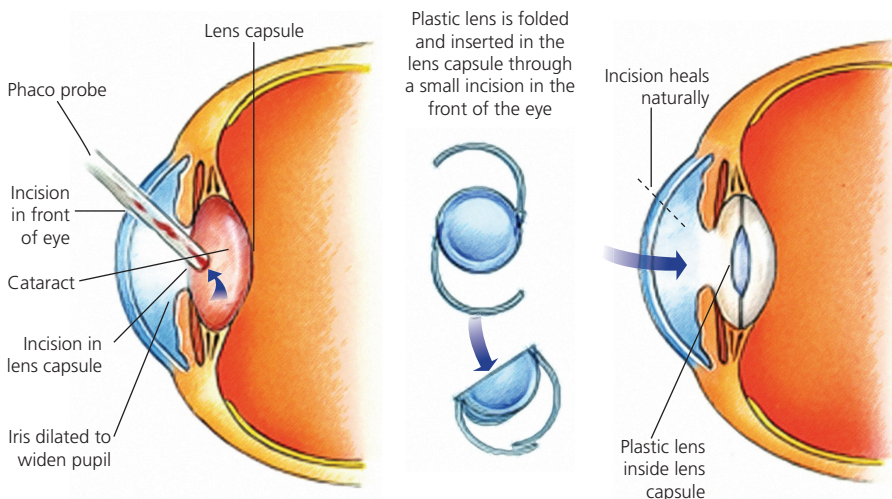
Extracapsular extraction

This procedure requires a larger incision to remove the cloudy lens. A lens loop is used to remove the entire lens at once.



What is an IOL implant?

IOL stands for Intraocular Lens. It is a lens implanted in the eye used to treat cataracts. Before IOL's were developed, people had to wear very thick eyeglasses or special contact lenses to be able to see after cataract surgery. Now, with cataract lens replacement, several types of IOL implants are available to help people enjoy improved vision. One needs to discuss the options with an ophthalmologist to determine the IOL, that best suits your vision needs and lifestyle.



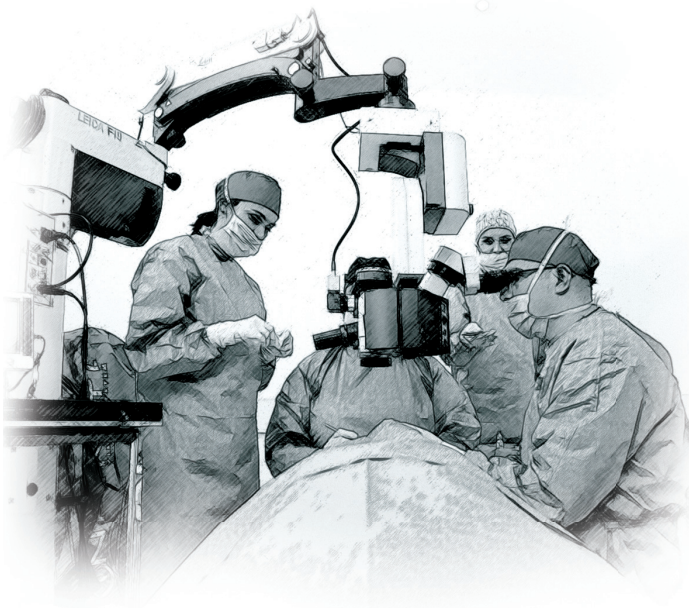
The day of the surgery

- ✎ You will be admitted to the surgical facility on the day of your surgery. After the cataract/IOL procedure, you will probably be able to go home the same day. Occasionally, an overnight stay is needed
- ✎ An anaesthesiologist or nurse anaesthetist will review your history. Be sure to ask any questions you may have about the anaesthesia
- ✎ The operating room nurse will check your I.D. band and verify what procedure you are having. You will then be transferred to the operating room

After the surgery





After the surgery, you will be taken to the recovery area, where a nurse will monitor your progress. You will be asked to sit up and sip liquids. You may not remember much about the operation.

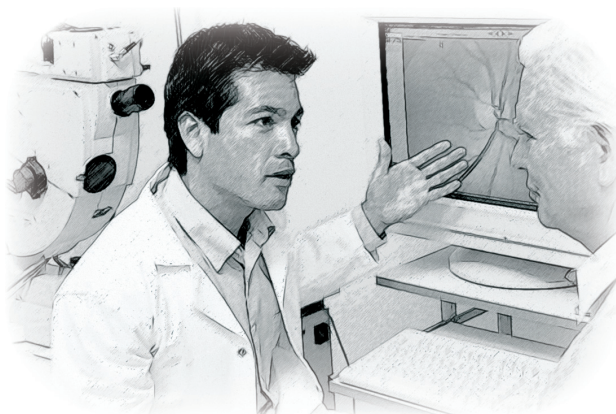
You will go home the same day as your surgery or, occasionally, the next day. But you will not be able to drive. Have an adult family member or friend drive you.



Recovery

You need to take precautions while your eye is healing, namely:

-  Do not rub your eyes
-  Avoid strenuous exercise
-  Avoid bending over
-  Do not lift heavy objects





Follow-up care




Your doctor will arrange a follow-up visit to check your IOL, be sure you are healing well and answer any question you have.



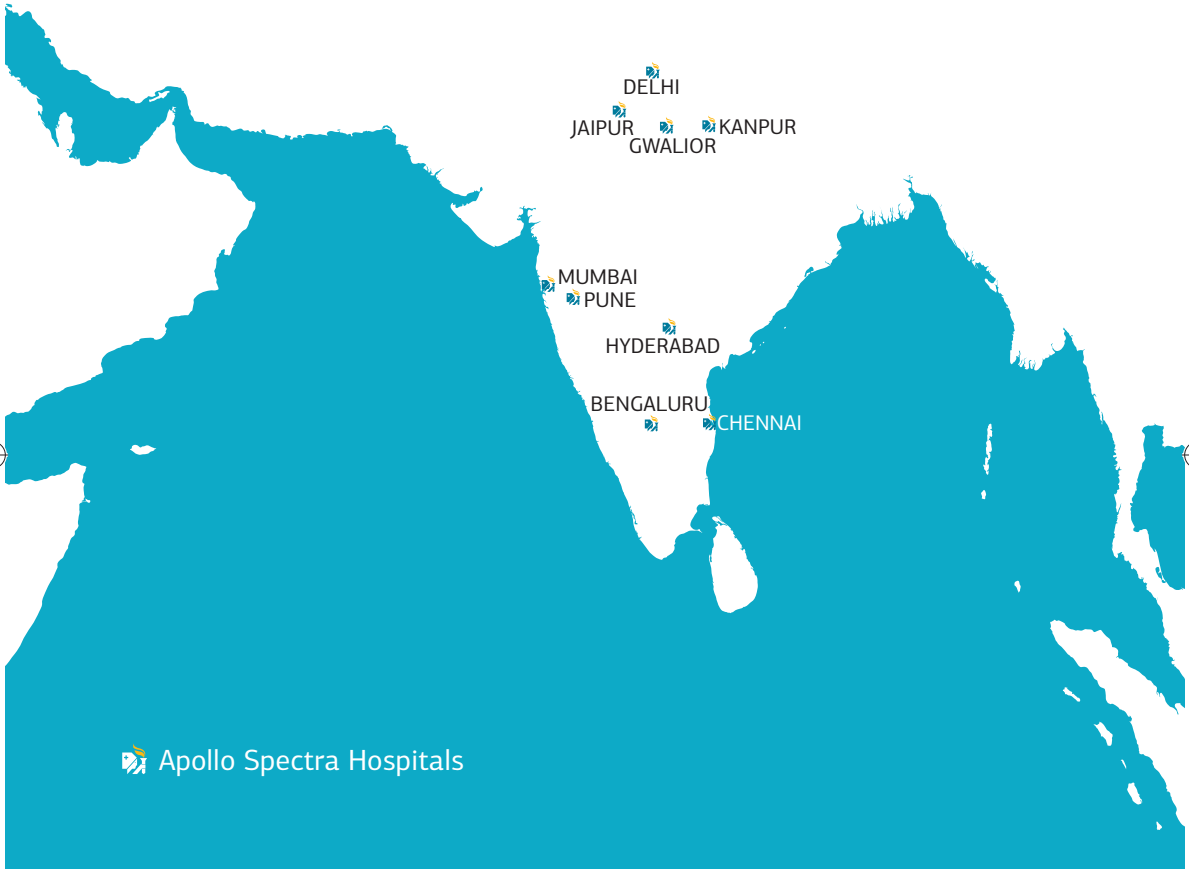
Call the doctor if

-  You have pain, unrelieved by medication
-  You develop persistent nausea and vomiting



-  You develop fever
-  You develop unusual symptoms
-  You experience a significant reduction in vision





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