

Cataract

A diagnosis of cataract means that your normally clear lens, located behind your eye's colorful iris, has grown cloudy. The lens contains mostly water and proteins that are specially organized to focus light on the retina for clear vision. In many people, the proteins begin to clump and obscure vision.

While recent scientific advances are closing in on what causes the proteins to rearrange and the lens to cloud up, we do know key risk factors for cataract formation. Growing older is one. So are long-term exposure to sunlight and smoking cigarettes. Other risk factors are listed below.

The majority of cataracts are age-related. A cataract begins as a small opacity within the lens and grows until it interferes with vision. Many people have cataracts and don't even notice until the defect grows large. Vision might appear a little hazy at first and lights might give off a halo or glare. Colors can appear faded. Blue might look green and yellow might appear white.

Ultimately, everyday tasks become challenging. It is at this point that many people have cataract-removal surgery. By one widely accepted estimate, the ability to delay the onset of cataract by 10 years would eliminate the need for half of all cataract surgeries.

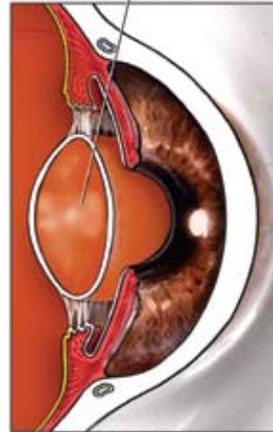
According to the World Health Organization, cataracts are the leading cause of blindness in the world. In the U.S., more than half of all people 65 and older have a cataract.

Fortunately, cataract surgery can be very effective. The surgeon removes the clouded lens and typically replaces it with an artificial lens.

Important Vision Saving News

Scientists funded by Research to Prevent Blindness (RPB) are pursuing the minute

Lens clouded by cataract



Cataract surgery involves replacement of the eye's natural lens with an artificial intraocular lens (IOL). The success rate is above 90%. IOLs are available that let patients see at single distances or at multiple distances. Some block damaging ultraviolet and blue light. Fewer than 2% of patients experience complications.

details of lens structure and function, and exploring how genetics, age and other risk factors contribute to cataract formation.

- Quitting smoking and wearing protective sunglasses and a hat when outdoors can protect against cataracts.
- Eating a low calorie, nutritionally complete diet can reduce the risk of cataract formation.
- If you have diabetes, it is important to maintain control of blood sugar to prevent all forms of diabetic eye disease, including cataracts.

Recent Strides by Researchers

- Explained a potential link between oxygen exposure and cataract formation
- Found that diets rich in lutein and zeaxanthin are moderately associated with decreased prevalence of nuclear cataract in older women
- Investigated lens proteins that maintain lens clarity
- Gained insight into preventing cataracts related to eye surgery