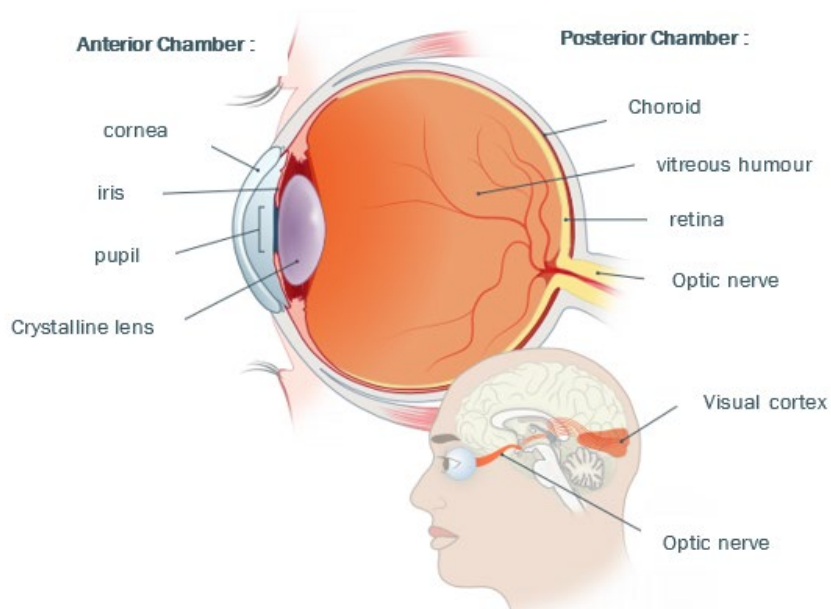


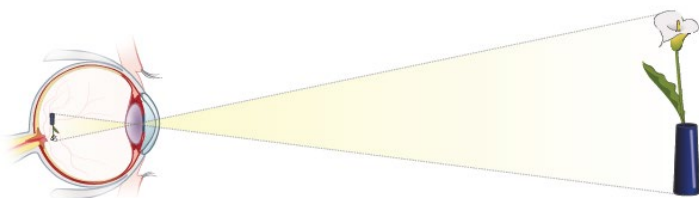
# CATARACT SURGERY

## EYE ANATOMY

The eye is a camera-like structure composed of 2 lenses: the cornea in the front and the crystalline lens located deeper inside, behind the iris. The retina captures the images and the optic nerve sends them to the brain.

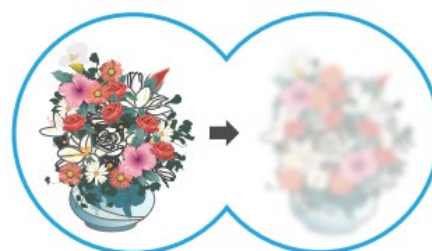


When light enters the eye, the crystalline lens focuses the rays onto a single point on the retina, creating an image we can see.



## WHAT IS A CATARACT?

A cataract is a vision disorder that occurs when the crystalline lens loses its transparency. Cataracts manifest as blurry vision, as if you were looking through a waterfall or fog. In fact, it's that impression that gives cataract its name, from the Latin *cataracta* for waterfall.

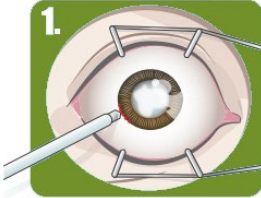


Due to ageing of the eye, those aged 65 and older are more likely to have cataracts. However, cataracts may be secondary to other diseases or trauma.

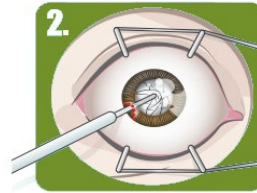
## WHAT IS CATARACT SURGERY?

Surgery is the only treatment for cataracts. However, it is not considered urgent as cataracts do not pose a danger to the eye.

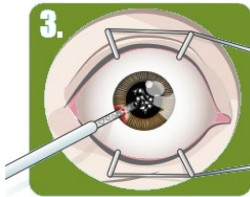
## THE SURGERY IN FOUR STEPS



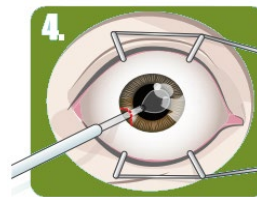
1. The ophthalmologist makes a small incision on the side of the cornea.



2. Tiny instruments are inserted to delicately break up the crystalline lens.



3. The crystalline lens is then suctioned out.



4. The ophthalmologist then implants a new lens.

In most cases, no sutures are required. This procedure is performed under local anesthesia. It takes about a full month for optimal recovery.

## ON THE DAY OF THE SURGERY

### RECEPTION

- The nursing staff will administer drops in the eye to be operated on.
- One drop will dilate (expand) the pupil (black dot in the middle of the eye) so the ophthalmologist can access the cataract.
- The other drop is an antibiotic to reduce the risk of infection.
- Since the drops will cause blurry vision and take 24 hours to wear off, please arrange to have someone accompany you home.
- If you have anxiety, medication may be offered under certain conditions. Its effect will take 15 to 30 minutes to set in.

## OPERATING ROOM

- A medical team member will administer additional drops to numb your eye (local anesthesia).  
*Note: You might hear the sound of devices and people speaking around you, but you will not feel any pain.*
- During the surgery, you will lie on an adapted chair or stretcher.
- A sterile drape will be placed on your face with an opening above the eye to be operated on.  
*Note: Avoid speaking during the surgery. Speaking might cause your eye to move. The ophthalmologist will explain each step to you.*
- An eye shield or patch may be applied to protect your eye at the end of the surgery.

## **AFTER THE SURGERY**

### EYE DROPS

- The nursing staff will provide you with an eye drop prescription.
- Speak to your pharmacist if you have any questions.
- Artificial tears may be used for comfort.
- If you are using eye drops for glaucoma, it is important to continue using them.



## **AFTER RETURNING HOME**

### INSTRUCTIONS

#### **Pain**

You may experience discomfort around the eye or mild headache. If you do, you may take acetaminophen (Tylenol® ou Atasol®) or ibuprofen (Advil®).



#### **Eye shield**

You might be required to wear an eye shield (plastic cover) on the operated eye while sleeping. The nursing staff will instruct you on how to use it.



#### **Hygiene**

You may shower and wash your hair starting on the day after your surgery.

- Avoid getting soap in your eyes.
- Do not wear make-up for a week.



## Activities

Activities of daily living such as walking, reading, working on the computer, and housekeeping are allowed after the surgery.

Cold weather and wind do not pose a risk.

### OVER THE NEXT 7 DAYS, DO NOT:

- Practise certain sports such as golf, running/jogging, weight lifting, or bowling.
- Lift or carry loads above 20 lbs.
- Swim or visit a spa.
- Have sex.
- Find yourself in dusty environments such as animal farms, construction sites, gardens, etc.

## GUIDELINES

- Bend your knees before picking up objects on the floor or ground.
- Sit down to tie your shoe laces.
- Avoid bending over with your head below your waist for 3 to 4 days.

## WARNING!

Do not rub your eyes for two weeks after the surgery.



## RETURN TO WORK

Recovery time depends on the type of work performed. Speak to your ophthalmologist.

## DRIVING

Driving is prohibited for the first 24 hours. The condition of your eyesight will determine when you can drive thereafter. Speak to your ophthalmologist at your next appointment.



## NORMAL SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Signs and symptoms	Explanations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blurry or double vision</li> <li>• Seeing halos around lights</li> <li>• Dilated pupil</li> <li>• Redness, irritation and/or sensitivity in the eye</li> <li>• Gritty or sandy feeling in the eye</li> </ul>	<p>It is normal to experience these disagreeable sensations, which can last up to one week. They will resolve on their own over time. You can use artificial tears up to 4 times daily for relief.</p>

## SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS THAT REQUIRE IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ATTENTION

Signs and symptoms	What to do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant decrease in vision</li> <li>• Severe pain</li> <li>• Excessive redness</li> </ul>	<p>Weekdays: Contact your ophthalmologist.</p> <p>Evenings and weekends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Go to the nearest emergency department for immediate assistance.</li> <li>• If you live in Sherbrooke or the surrounding area, go to Hôtel-Dieu's emergency department.</li> </ul>



If you experience symptoms such as redness, pain, or decreased vision, contact the ophthalmology pivot nurse Monday to Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at 819-346-1110, Ext. 22127.



Outside these business hours, go to your nearest emergency department.

### Author

Direction des services professionnels

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