

After Cataract Surgery

For patients recovering after day surgery

Read this brochure to learn more about:

- How to take care of your eye
- What activities are safe
- How to prevent injury
- How to cope with pain
- When you see your eye surgeon for a follow-up appointment



You have had an anesthetic or narcotic medicine.

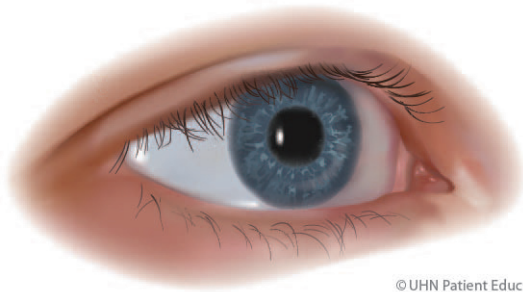
- Do not drive a car or drink alcohol for 24 hours.
- Have a responsible adult stay with you overnight.



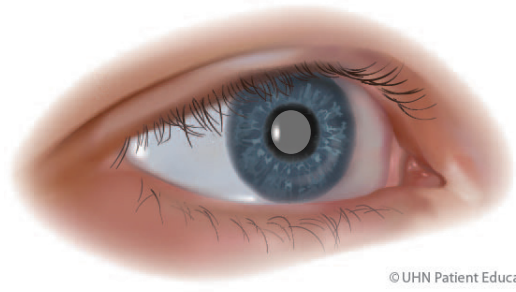
What is cataract surgery?

One of the most common problems that can affect your vision is a cataract.

A cataract happens when the lens in your eye becomes cloudy (usually because of aging). During cataract surgery the doctor removes the clouded lens and replaces it with a clear artificial lens.



normal lens



cataract

What can I eat and drink after my surgery?

After your surgery, you can eat and drink as usual.

If you are feeling nauseated (sick to your stomach) or vomiting, you can:

- Get anti-nausea medication from your pharmacy without a prescription (such as Gravol, which you can take as a pill or rectally). Always follow the instructions on the package.
- Keep drinking fluids until the nausea stops. Then gradually eat your usual meals again.

How much activity is safe?

- Go home and rest today.
- Then you can go back to your normal activities.
- You can bend, stoop, cough, bathe, shave, walk outside, and watch television. You can also sleep on any side you wish.



Things you should NOT do

- Tiring physical activities or sports like:
 - swimming
 - jogging
 - aerobics
 - gardening
- Any activity that might put a lot of pressure or strain on your eye (for example, lifting heavy objects over 5 kilograms or 10 pounds)
- Use hot tubs and steam rooms until the surgeon says it's OK
- Drive a car or operate a vehicle
- Strain when having a bowel movement

Your surgeon will tell you when you can go back to work, play sports and drive a vehicle.

When can I take showers or baths? How do I wash my eye?

- You can take a shower or bath 24 hours after your surgery.
- **Do not get water or soap in your eye.** Keep your eye closed while you shower.
- Use a clean washcloth every time and normal tap water to clean secretions from your lashes or the corner of your eye.
- Do not wash your eye with any store bought eyewash.

How do I take care of my eye?

- It is normal for your eye to be red, uncomfortable, sensitive to light, teary, and blurred after your surgery. These symptoms should slowly get better over the next few days and weeks.
- Your vision will start to get better within a few days, but it can take up to 8 weeks for your eye to fully heal.
- To protect your operated eye during the day, wear your regular glasses or sunglasses when you go outside.
- Do not rub, press or let anything touch your eye.
- Use a clean tissue or facecloth to remove any secretions.

If you go home with a plastic shield:

- You may go home wearing a plastic shield. Only wear it until your follow-up appointment. Then wear it every night to protect your eye.
- Ask your Day Surgery nurse for a plastic shield if you are not wearing one.
- During the day you can use your regular glasses or sunglasses when you go outside.
- Keep the shield clean by washing it with soap and water every day.

How do I cope with pain?

It's normal for your eye to feel itchy and uncomfortable for a couple of days after your surgery. This will get better with time. If your eye is uncomfortable, take the medication that was prescribed to you by your surgeon. Or, take Tylenol Extra Strength as directed on the bottle.

Do not take Aspirin (ASA) or medication that contains ASA unless your surgeon has told you to. If you take Aspirin every day, ask your surgeon when you can restart it.

How to use your eye drops

We may give you a prescription for eye drops or eye ointment. Take the prescription to a pharmacy to have it filled. Always follow the directions on the package for taking the eye drops or ointment.

If you have never used eye drops before, ask the nurse for the pamphlet called "How to Give Eye Drops".

Bring your eye drops or eye ointment with you to all your follow-up appointments.

When to start your eye drops

If your surgeon asked you to start your drops today, put them in your eye when you get home. If you have a shield, remove it to give yourself the drops and then tape it back on.

If you have not been asked to start your drops today, you will start your eye drops after your follow-up appointment with your surgeon.

When can I take my usual medication again?

If you have not taken your usual daily medications, take them as soon as you get home.



Watch for these problems

Call your surgeon or your family doctor or come to the Toronto Western Hospital emergency department. If you are from out of town, go to the nearest emergency department if any of these problems below happen to you:

- Increasing pain that does not get better after taking pain medication
- A gush of fluid from your eye
- Light flashes or spots (called floaters) in front of your eye
- Vision loss or no vision in the operated eye
- A fever (temperature higher than 38 °C or 101 °F)
- Increasing redness or swelling on your eyelid that does not get better with time
- Increasing redness in the operated eye
- Nausea (upset stomach) or vomiting that continues for more than 8 hours and does not go away after taking Gravol
- Green or yellow pus coming from the operated eye

My follow-up appointment

Your surgeon will see you in the office the day after your surgery, unless instructed differently. If you do not have a follow-up appointment, call the office to schedule one. Remember to bring your health card (OHIP card) to all your follow-up appointments.

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