

Having a cataract operation



The operation will help you see better



Version 2 - Jan 2011

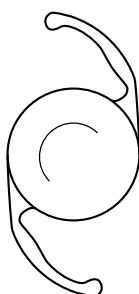
SeeAbility Easy Read Factsheet 7

Lots of people have cataract operations.

It is a very safe operation.

The cloudy lens in your eye is replaced by a clear lens.

The new lens looks like this.

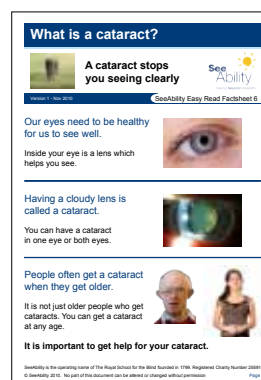


This factsheet tells you about having a cataract operation.

More information.

There is a film and other factsheets to help you understand about cataracts and choosing to have an operation.

- 'You and Eye' film.
- 'What is a cataract?' factsheet.
- 'Consent and capacity' factsheet.



The 'You and Eye' film and our Easy Read factsheets are on the Look Up website. Go to: www.lookupinfo.org



You need to go to hospital twice to have your cataract operation.

The first visit is for a check up.



The second visit is for the operation a few weeks later.



You will be able to go home after each visit. You won't stay overnight in hospital.



You and your supporters can ask for help.

Many hospitals have Learning Disability Liaison Nurses.

Some hospitals have Eye Clinic Liaison Officers.

These people can help you get ready for your operation.



The first hospital visit - Your check up

You will be sent a letter telling you the date of your check up at the eye clinic.



It is a good idea to go to your check up with a supporter who knows you well.



The eye doctor will measure your eyes and look at your cataracts.



The nurse will check your blood pressure.



The nurse and the eye doctor will talk to you about your cataract operation.

You and your supporter can ask questions.



The eye doctor will tell you the date for the operation which will be in a few weeks time.




Getting ready for your operation

You and your supporters should plan the help you will need.

You may need help before, during and after your operation.

We have a form called 'Eye Surgery Support Plan'

 information on eye care and vision for people with learning disabilities			
Eye Surgery Support Plan			
Name of Individual:		Person responsible for this Action Plan:	
Date Action Plan Form completed:		Date of surgery:	

While this suggested Support Plan covers many of the areas that you should consider when supporting a person with learning disabilities through eye surgery, it should not be regarded as exhaustive. The needs of the individual through the surgery process will obviously vary greatly. This document therefore, should be used flexibly and those of you who know the above named individual well should make additions and alterations to meet his/her unique needs.

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You can use this form to plan the help you need. Go to www.lookupinfo.org then click on 'Essential Forms and Booklets'.

Your plan will also help doctors and nurses understand how you communicate and will tell them any other important information about you.



Before your operation you might find it useful to:

- Visit the eye clinic or look at pictures of the eye clinic to get to know the faces, voices and names of the people you will meet when you have the operation.



- Watch the 'You and Eye' film about having a cataract operation. Go to: www.lookupinfo.org.uk



- Practice having someone cover your eye with an eye patch.



- Practice wearing sunglasses and a sun hat.



- If you touch or rub your eyes a lot you may need a plan to help you do this less.



The second hospital visit - Your operation



You need someone who knows you well to go with you on the day of the operation.



This person will take you home on the same day to support you afterwards.

At the eye clinic you will meet the nurse. The nurse will talk to you about what will happen.



The nurse will check your blood pressure again.



Your eyes will be looked at again.



Before your operation you will have eye drops.

This will make your eye numb, so you don't feel any pain.



Some people might have an anaesthetic to make them sleep during the operation.



You may be taken to have your operation on a hospital trolley bed.

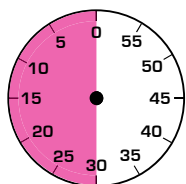


The operation will take place in an operating theatre.



During the operation the eye doctor will take the cataract out of your eye and put a clear lens in.

The operation doesn't hurt.



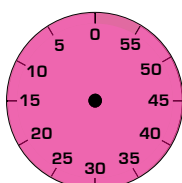
30 Minutes

The operation takes about 30 minutes.

After the operation you will have a soft bandage plastic shield like a lens put on your eye.



You will need to stay in the hospital for about an hour.



1 Hour

This is so the nurses can check you are okay.



After your operation

The feeling will come back to your eye after a few hours.

After the operation your eye might feel sore or bruised but this feeling will go away in a day or two.



You and your supporters need to follow the advice given by your eye doctor and nurse.

They will tell you when it is okay to take the bandage and plastic shield off your eye.



You will need to have drops in your eyes, or tablets, for a few weeks after the operation.



You will need to have plans in place for drops or tablets to be given to you.

You may need to rest for a few days after the operation. You should not swim or do sport.



You may see things more clearly soon after the operation.

Sometimes it can take longer to notice this.

Things may also look brighter.



before



after

You may need to wear sunglasses or a sun hat for a few days after the operation.



You may need support to stop you rubbing or touching your eyes after your operation.



You will have a check up with the eye doctor a few weeks after the operation.



If you have cataracts in both eyes you will have one eye operated on at a time.

It may be a few weeks or months before you have the other eye operated on.



Remember - you don't have to live with cataracts and poor vision.

An operation will help you see again and to your enjoy your world clearly and safely.



Go see to it !



We would like to thank Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust for their kind support and co-operation in helping us to develop this factsheet.

Designed by The Clear Communication People Ltd, email: mike@communicationpeople.co.uk. Some photosymbols used go to www.photosymbols.com



information on eye care and vision
for people with learning disabilities



www.seeability.org
www.lookupinfo.org