

Cataract surgery

Information for patients and carers

If you need this leaflet in a different language or accessible format please speak to a member of staff who can arrange it for you.

اگر به این بروشور به زبان دیگر یا در قالب دسترس پذیر نیاز دارید، لطفاً با یکی از کارکنان صحبت کنید تا آن را برای شما تهیه کند.

Jeśli niniejsza ulotka ma być dostępna w innym języku lub formie, proszę skontaktować się z członkiem personelu, który ją dla Państwa przygotowuje.

Dacă aveți nevoie de această broșură într-o altă limbă sau într-un format accesibil, vă rog să discutați cu un membru al personalului să se ocupe de acest lucru pentru dumneavoastră

如果您需要本传单的其他语言版本或无障碍格式，请联系工作人员为您安排。

إذا احتجت إلى هذه النشرة بلغة أخرى، أو بتيسيق يسهل الوصول إليه، يرجى التحدث إلى أحد الموظفين لترتيب ذلك لك.

St Helens Hospital
Marshalls Cross Road,
St Helens, Merseyside,
WA9 3DA
01744 26633

www.MerseyWestLancs.nhs.uk

Author: Lead nurse
Department: Ophthalmology
Document Number: MWL2444
Version: 001
Review Date: 01/01/2028

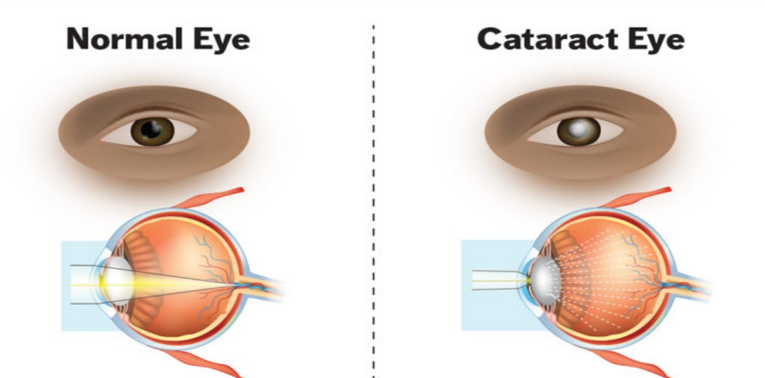
What is cataract surgery?

Every human eye has a very small lens inside it, which focuses the light that enters the eye to create a clear, sharp image. When that lens becomes cloudy it is known as cataract. As the cataract develops, it gradually restricts the amount of light entering the eye, and may cause:

- Blurred vision.
- Fading of colours.
- A change in your spectacle prescription.
- Visual problems dependent on lighting for example glare or halos.

Important information

If you have severe pain, increased redness or loss of vision, you should contact the Ophthalmology Department immediately on: 01744 646136 / 646137.



Following your operation

- You should rest quietly for the remainder of the day.
- Your face, forehead and cheek may feel numb following your anaesthetic. This is normal and will wear off gradually.
- You may feel some discomfort following your operation and for a few days afterwards. Taking mild pain relief medicine, for example paracetamol, will help. If you are already taking pain relief medication for a different condition, continue with these but do not take both.
- If you have any change or sudden loss in vision, severe pain, nausea or vomiting please contact the hospital on the telephone numbers given overleaf.
- Do not remove your eye dressing until the morning after your operation. If the dressing falls off, wash the plastic cover thoroughly with warm soapy water and dry with a clean towel. Replace the plastic cover over your eye, using tape to secure it.
- It is normal for your eye to water and for tears to be blood stained for 2-3 days.
- You can read, watch television and go outdoors. Although it is not necessary to cover your eye, you may find bright light uncomfortable. If this is the case, shield your eyes with sunglasses.
- Please do not rub or touch your eye. Wear the plastic cover provided over your eye, whilst in bed for 2 weeks. This will protect your eye during sleep.
- You may wash your face and hair but avoid getting soap into your eyes.
- You will be seen a few weeks after your surgery by the specialist nurses, or the surgeon for a review.

What causes cataracts?

Most cataracts are the natural result of ageing, but they may occur in younger people due to many other reasons. Examples include:

- Trauma or surgery to the eye.
- Diseases such as diabetes.
- Prolonged inflammation of the eye.

What is the treatment for cataracts?

The only proven treatment for cataracts is surgery, where the cloudy cataract lens is removed and replaced by a perfectly clear artificial lens, known as an 'intraocular lens implant,' allowing light to once again reach the back of the eye normally.

Cataracts can take many years to develop. Cataract surgery is generally considered only when the cataract has progressed to the point that your day-to-day activities are affected, otherwise there may be no benefit in having the surgery.

The pre-assessment clinic

At this clinic you will undergo all the tests necessary for our staff to gather the information needed for your surgery to go ahead. You will also be given a chance to ask any questions or raise any concerns that you may have. The clinic team will require information on your previous medical history, surgical history and current medication.

A nurse will measure the strength of your spectacles as well as the length and curvature of your eyes. This information will be used to calculate the strength of the artificial lens implant to be placed in your eye once the cataract has been removed. These tests are not painful and the nurse will explain what is happening at each stage.

Before your operation

In order to reduce the risk of your operation being cancelled due to a condition called blepharitis (a chronic inflammation affecting the edges of the eyelids, leading to a build-up of deposits on the skin and the eyelash margins), we would like you to perform the following lid hygiene for one week prior to your operation:

- Wash your hands thoroughly before and after cleaning your eyelids.
- Mix one teaspoonful of mild baby shampoo (any brand) into a full mug of boiled water, that has cooled down. Commercially available lid shampoos are also available.
- Use a clean face cloth and dip in the solution. Put the cloth over your finger and gently scrub the edges of your eyelids and between your eyelashes to remove any crusting or scaly deposits.
- You must be careful not to touch your eye.
- Rinse your eyelids thoroughly after cleaning, using cooled boiled water on a clean face cloth.

If in the days immediately before the planned surgery you are started on antibiotics by your GP, or develop an infection anywhere in the body, such as:

- A cough, cold or runny nose.
- A urinary tract infection.
- Diarrhoea and vomiting.
- A red or sticky eye.
- An infected wound or skin infection (cellulitis).

Please contact us on the numbers at the end of this leaflet as we will not be able to proceed with the surgery and will have to postpone your operation, until the infection has cleared.

On the day of surgery

If you are having a local anaesthetic, you should eat and drink as normal. You should take all you prescribed medications as normal unless you have been told otherwise.

If you are having a general anaesthetic, you will be advised regarding fasting instruction and prescribed medications which you need to follow.