

Cataract Surgery

What Is Cataract?

Cataract refers to the clouding of the native lens of the human eye. It is most commonly due to aging, but may also occur due to trauma, diabetes, radiation exposure or drug related (eg. on long term steroids use.)

What Are The Signs And Symptoms Of Cataract?

- Blurring of vision
- Reduced vibrancy of colour
- Poor night vision
- Glare, with difficulty seeing clearly when you are in places with bright lights or sunlight
- Difficulty in seeing bus numbers or faces across the street
- Frequent changes in your spectacles prescription or contact lens

How Is The Cataract Treated?

Cataract can be managed conservatively by prescribing spectacles to improve the vision, however if it interferes with your daily activities (e.g. reading, driving, watching tv), surgery should be considered.

What Are The Different Types Of Cataract Surgery?

Phacoemulsification

A procedure in which an ultrasonic wave device is used to break up the cloudy lens through a small incision. An Intraocular Lens (IOL) is implanted and positioned into the lens's natural capsule. No stitches are required.

Extracapsular Cataract Extraction (ECCE)

An incision wound is created and the entire cataract is delivered as a whole, while leaving the capsular bag intact. An Intraocular Lens (IOL) is placed within the capsular bag. Stitches are required. The stitches may need to be removed about 1 to 2 months after the surgery.

What Are The Types Of Intraocular Lens (IOL) Available?

Intraocular Lens (IOL) is a tiny, lightweight clear plastic disc made of silicone or acrylic. It replaces the focusing power of the eye's natural lens. There are three kinds of lenses available.

Monofocal Intraocular Lens (IOL)

A standard lens to correct for distance. However, reading glasses will still be required.

Multifocal Intraocular Lens (IOL)

It helps the eye to focus at various distances, allowing the wearer to see both near and far objects clearly.

Toric Intraocular Lens (IOL)

An Intraocular Lens (IOL) that corrects astigmatism as well as nearsightedness or farsightedness.

What Preparations Should I Make If I Am Having Cataract Surgery?

- You will need to undergo a series of investigations to ensure your fitness for surgery. This will include a blood test, electrocardiogram (ECG).
- You may be scheduled to see an anaesthetist to ensure your medical fitness to undergo surgery
- Further tests will be done to ensure accurate intraocular lens calculation

What Should I Do On The Day Of Surgery?

- Fasting depends on time of surgery
- If you are diabetic and on medication, **do not** take your medicine or administer any injections on the day of the operation
- If you are asthmatic and on an inhaler puff, bring along your inhaler medicine.
- Do not drive on the day of surgery
- You are strongly encouraged to arrange for someone to accompany you on the day of surgery
- Wash your hair and take a shower
- Wash your face, including your eyelids
- Do not apply make-up
- Remove all jewelry, contact lenses or false eyelashes
- Wear comfortable clothing such as a loose-fitting top with front buttons and shorts or pants
- Bring a pair of sunglasses in case your eyes are sensitive to light

Do I Need To Make Any Changes To My Exercise Routine Or Diet Following The Operation?

- Avoid strenuous activities such as running, golf, basketball or volleyball
- Do not carry excessive heavy weights or bend below your waist.
- Avoid swimming and water sports
- You may start on less strenuous exercises such as walking and stretching within the first week following your surgery
- You may resume reading, writing or watching TV any time after the surgery when you are comfortable
- There are no diet restrictions except those recommended by your doctor

What Do I Need To Do Post-Operation?

- Your operated eye will be padded or covered with an eye shield
- You need to put on your eye shield for at least two weeks post operatively while sleeping to avoid accidental injury
- Wear sunglasses during the day to minimize glare
- Maintain eye hygiene by cleaning your eye daily with normal saline and sterile cotton wool for a week starting from the day after your operation
- Instill eye drops according to your doctor's prescription
- Avoid getting soap and shampoo into your eyes when washing your face and hair for the first two weeks after surgery
- Avoid rubbing the operated eye for the first month
- Do not carry infants to prevent accidental injury to the operated eye
- Do not apply make-up or wear contact lenses for 1 month
- You may be able to drive when your vision is clear or as advised by your doctor

Adherence To Follow-Up Appointment(s):

To prevent complications after the surgery, please adhere to your follow-up appointment dates after the operation.

- 1 day after operation:
- 1 week after operation:
- 1 month after operation:

What Are The Necessary Eye Hygiene Practices To Adhere To?

This is necessary to remove any bacteria, crusts or discharges from the eyelids/eyelashes after eye surgery.

How do I clean my eyelids?

- Wash your hands with soap and water. Dry your hands thoroughly before and after cleaning your eyes
- Prepare a sterile cotton swab pack and sterile normal saline
- Open the sterile cotton swab pack and the normal saline vial
- Pour the normal saline onto the cotton swab pack
- Squeeze the cotton swab pack to drain off excess saline
- Clean your lower and upper eyelid following these steps:
 - To clean your lower lid, tilt your head backwards and gently pull your lower eyelid down towards your cheek using your finger
 - To clean your upper lid, look down to the ground and gently lift your upper eyelid with your finger towards your eyebrow
- Clean your eyelids starting from the inner aspect before progressing to the outer aspect
- The cotton swab should be passed along the lid margins only once in one smooth motion
- You may swab your eyelids as many times as necessary until they are clean
- Use each cotton swab only once
- Clean your eyelids every morning or whenever there is discharge or crust

Instillation And Application Of Eye Drops And Ointment

General Instructions

- Check the expiry date on the eye drops or ointment
- Instill the eye drops before applying eye ointment
- Wash your hands with soap and water, then dry your hands thoroughly before and after instilling the eye drops or eye ointment
- If more than one type of eye drop is required, wait 5 minutes before instilling the next eye drop. Apply the eye ointment after all other eye drops have been instilled

Steps for instillation of eye drops

1. Gently shake the eye drop bottle before use
2. Tilt your head backward slightly and gently pull your lower eyelid down with your fingers to expose the center of the eyelid
3. Hold the bottle 2cm above your eye and allow the medication to drop into the lower fornix
4. Avoid touching the eyelids or surrounding area of the dropper tip of the bottle
5. Remove excess eye drop with a clean tissue

Application Of Eye Ointment

- Squeeze away some ointment before use.
- Tilt your head backward slightly and gently pull the lower eyelid down with your fingers to expose the center of eyelid.
- Hold the eye ointment in the other hand.
- Apply ointment into the inside of the lower eyelid beginning at the inner to outer eyelid.
- Do not touch the eyelids or surrounding area with the tip of the tube.
- Gently close your eyes.
- Remove excess ointment with clean tissue.

Important Notes

- Store the eye drops and ointment as per your doctor or pharmacy's instruction
- Discard the eye drops and ointment one month from the date of opening or otherwise as instructed
- You may or may not be required to complete the entire bottle or tube, depending on your course of treatment
- Follow the prescribed instructions. If in doubt, please check with your doctor
- Please bring along your medications to every doctor's visit

When Should I Seek Medical Help?

Should you experience any of the following symptoms:

- Sudden or severe throbbing pain with or without nausea or vomiting
- Sudden increase of floaters or flashes
- Sudden deterioration of vision
- Excessive discharge from the operation site
- Excessive bleeding
- Excessive swelling

Please contact our main line or head to your nearest Emergency Department.

Alexandra Hospital

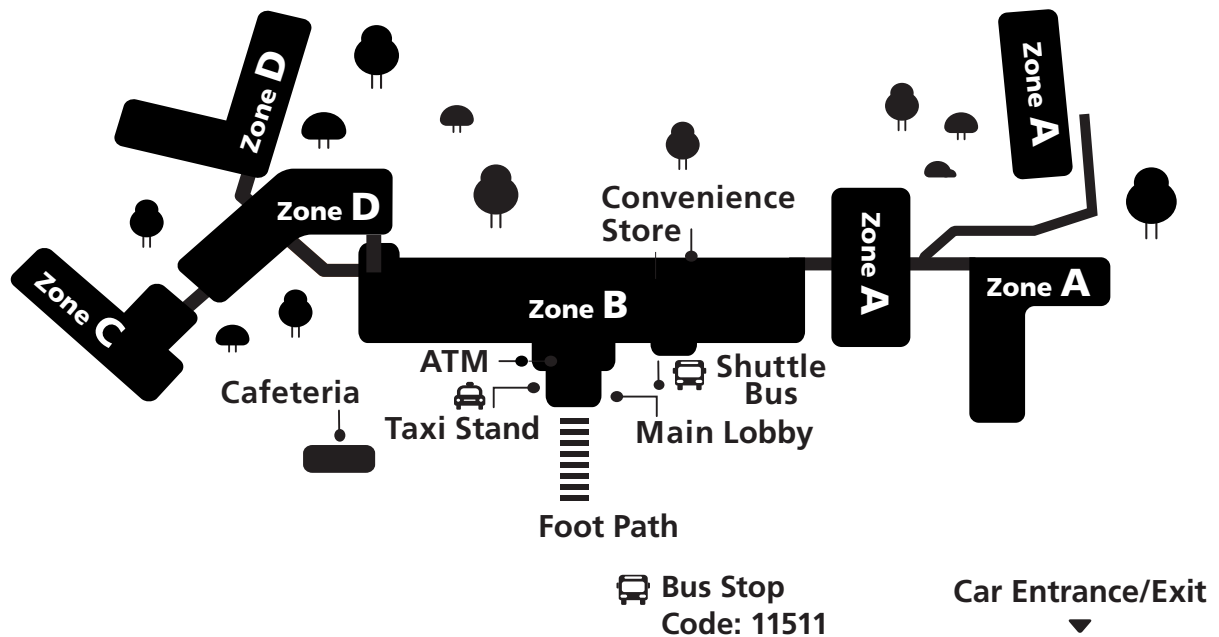
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