



What is a Cataract?

Cataract is a clouding of the lens inside the eye. Poor vision results because the cloudiness interferes with light entering the eye. Most cataracts form as a result of ageing and long-term exposure to ultra violet light. Cataract surgery is one of the most commonly performed surgical procedures in Australia and has a high success rate.

What are the symptoms?

- Symptoms include gradual and painless blurred vision and an increased sensitivity to glare especially while driving at night.
- Vision with a cataract can be likened to looking through a dirty window. Changes in colour perception, with yellowing of images may be noticed.
- People with cataract may experience difficulty finding adequate light sources while reading and find that new glasses eventually do not help this problem.

Who is at risk of Cataract

- Cataracts are a leading cause of vision impairment in Australia. 31% of the population over the age of 55 has cataract.
- Increasing age is the most important risk factor for cataract.
- Cataract is associated with sun exposure.
- Other risk factors include diabetes, corticosteroid use, trauma and smoking.

What is the best defence against Cataract?

- Quitting smoking will reduce the risk of developing cataract.
- Protecting eyes from the harmful effects of the sun by wearing sunglasses and a hat and keeping out of the sun can help protect eyes from ultra violet light.
- People with cataract may need to update their glasses more frequently to ensure optimum vision. If spectacle correction does not improve the vision, surgery can be performed by an ophthalmologist.

Where can I go for more information?

Information on eye testing is available from your doctor, local optometrist or by referral to an ophthalmologist (medical eye specialist). Consult with your GP to arrange an appropriate referral to an eye care professional.

www.saveyoursight.org.au