



Common Questions Regarding the Treatment of Cataracts

The Hughes Eye Center is focused on providing the best medical and surgical eye care. Our staff includes board certified eye surgeons; residency trained optometrists, and highly trained staff members with over 75 years of combined medical/surgical experience. Our doctors do not perform routine eye examinations, fit contacts or prescribe glasses. We will communicate with your local eye and medical doctor to assure the best possible care!

Providers:

Dr. Matthew Hughes is a residency trained O.D. providing medical and surgical eye care in West Tennessee since 1991. Dr. Hughes practice is focused on the treatment and management of advanced eye disease and pathology. Dr. Tom Browning, Dr. David Underwood, Dr. John Linn, and Dr. Subba Gollamudi are surgical ophthalmologists specializing in cataract treatment.

Where will my surgery be performed? When will my surgery take place?

Our surgical counselor will discuss with you the date, time and location of your cataract treatment. You will be given a map and/or directions to the surgical location.

How long will my surgery take? How long will I be at the surgical facility?

You should plan on spending at least **three to four hours** at the surgical facility. Your surgery may only take 10 minutes, but expect to spend at least **three to four hours**. Notify family members to bring a light snack and a little something to keep them busy.

What does cataract surgery feel like?

Your cataract surgery should be a comfortable experience. During the procedure you may feel pressure on your eyeball; this is normal. Your eye may feel gritty, burn or sting after surgery; this is normal. Expect for the pupil of your eye to be dilated for several hours (possibly a day or two) after surgery.

How is cataract surgery performed? Is my cataract removed by a laser?

Most cataract surgeries are performed using a *revolutionary technique* called Phacoemulsification. Occasionally, large or unusual cataracts may be removed manually and stitches may be placed to properly close the wound and prevent infection. Injectable anesthetic (numbing medication) may be used to assure a comfortable surgical experience.

Prior to your surgery the doctors at The Hughes Eye Center will perform a comprehensive eye evaluation, ocular ultrasound and possibly laser analysis to determine which type of cataract surgery is right for you. We will review clinical information submitted by your local eye doctor to assure the best possible outcome.

What is a lens implant and what are the risks?

A lens implant is used to provide the best possible vision after cataract surgery. Rarely will the lens implant need to be replaced or repositioned. Most lens implants are placed behind the iris (colored part of the eye) and secured in the natural capsule. Proper placement of the lens implant will usually take less than one minute.

Lasers are not routinely used to remove cataracts but may be used several months after surgery to provide improved vision. This procedure called a YAG laser capsulotomy takes only a few minutes and is usually performed in the office or surgical suite with numbing eye drops (no shots or needles).

What are the risks associated with cataract surgery?

After the routine 3-month post operative period, better than 99% of our patients are able to see and function better. This leaves approximately a 1 % chance that removing your cataract may not improve vision. Be aware that removing your cataract is a surgical experience and there is risk of bleeding, swelling, infection or complication following any type of surgical procedure. You will be required to use eye drops for several weeks immediately following your surgery to prevent infection and swelling.

What happens if I'm a diabetic or I'm on a blood thinner (Coumadin, Plavix, Warfarin, Aspirin, etc.)?

30-40% of our cataract surgical patients are diabetics. As long as your eyes are healthy your risk of complication with cataract surgery is no different than a non-diabetic. Diabetics heal a little slower; therefore, it is normal for your vision to slowly improve – Please be patient! In some circumstances, blood thinners may need to be stopped prior to cataract surgery. When indicated the doctor and surgical counselor will discuss blood thinners with you.

What are my limitations after cataract surgery?

Unless otherwise instructed, immediately following your surgery you may bend, stoop, lift, read, watch TV or any other normal every day task. Avoid water on the operated eye for ONE week and avoid touching or placing any type of pressure on the eye.

Who will evaluate my eyes after the cataract surgery?

In certain situations, your local eye health provider (optometrist) is more than qualified to provide after cataract surgery care. If a problem develops, your local eye doctor will communicate directly with the doctors at The Hughes Eye Center. As always, you have the right to have your after cataract care with your local doctor or The Hughes Eye Center.

Will I need glasses after cataract surgery?

In most cases cataract surgery will lessen your dependence on glasses for distance related tasks. ***You will require glasses for near activities such as reading.*** It is OK to wear your old glasses after cataract surgery until your local eye doctor changes the prescription.

When should my glasses be changed after cataract surgery?

Typically, two to three weeks after cataract surgery it is safe for your local eye doctor to change your glasses prescription. Please remember --- ***The doctors at The Hughes Eye Center DO NOT prescribe or fit eyeglasses.***

Will cataract surgery eliminate my astigmatism?

Astigmatism refers to the natural shape of the cornea (front of the eye). In our experience it is unwise to routinely alter the natural shape of the cornea with cataract surgery. If you have astigmatism prior to cataract surgery, you will most likely have a similar amount after surgery.

Do I take my daily medications before surgery? Can I eat before surgery?

Take your daily medications the morning before surgery with a small sip of water. **Diabetics should not take their insulin or diabetic pills the morning before surgery.** Please make sure to bring all daily medications including your insulin and diabetic pills with you to surgery. **AVOID EATING FOODS OR DRINKING LIQUIDS EIGHT HOURS BEFORE SURGERY.**

When can I have the cataract in my other eye removed?

Once the desired vision and comfort is achieved in the first eye and specific clinical guidelines are met, we can plan on surgery for your other eye. *Typically, the cataract in the second eye can be dissolved one to four weeks after the surgery in the first eye.* Your primary eye health provider (optometrist) will coordinate your care and communicate your findings with The Hughes Eye Center. (731-664-1994)