Cataract Surgery

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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years.
What is a cataract?
A cataract is a clouding of the lens of your eye. The centre of the lens hardens making it hard for the eye to focus light. Common symptoms of cataracts are blurred vision and glare of halos around lights. Cataracts can be caused by aging, eye injury, disease and some medications.
Call your eye surgeon right away if you have:

- severe pain, swelling or unusual discharge
- sudden decrease or loss of vision
- sudden flashes of light in the eye
- a shadow, as though a dark curtain has been drawn across your eye

If you are unable to contact your eye surgeon, call locating at the VG (473-2222) and ask for the ophthalmology resident on call to be paged or go to the nearest Emergency Department.

Cataract Surgery

Cataracts can be removed easily with new surgical techniques. It is most often done under a local anaesthetic. This means you are awake during your surgery. The doctor will give you medication to freeze your eye. You may also be given medication to help you relax.

The surgeon makes a small incision in front of your eye. The cataract will be removed and a new plastic lens is placed in the eye behind the pupil.
Day of Surgery

• Read the pamphlet *Getting Ready for Eye Surgery.*

• The nurse will place drops in your eye.

• A needle with a rubber cap will be placed in a vein in your arm. Medication will be given through the needle.

• You will be taken to the Operating Room.

• After surgery, you will return to the Day Surgery Unit for discharge.

• You will be able to go home in about 20 - 30 minutes.

• With the bottle in the other hand, hold it as near as possible to the eyelid without touching it. Place one drop into the pocket made when the lower lid is pulled down.

• Do not touch the eyelid or eye with the tip of the bottle.

• Close the eye gently and keep closed for one full minute. With a tissue, gently remove excess drops from the cheek.

• Wash your hands well.

• Do not stop using your drops, without checking with your doctor.
Using Eye Drops
Follow the eye medication schedule given to you by your nurse or doctor.

• Wash your hands well.
• Shake the bottle well.
• Tilt your head back. You may sit or lie down.
• Open both eyes and look up. With one finger, draw the lower lid down.

Discharge Instructions

• You may or may not have a patch on your eye. If you do, leave it on until you see your eye surgeon, or we will tell you when to remove it. Your appointment with your eye surgeon is on _______________ at _____________.

At Home

• There may be some redness and bruising of your eye immediately after surgery.
• Continue taking any medications that were prescribed for you by other doctors.
• Take Tylenol® for any discomfort in your eye.
• Your doctor may tell you to use the shield over your eye every night for 1 - 3 weeks or as directed. This is to prevent an eye injury while you are asleep.
• Do not wear a cotton eye pad anytime after it has been removed.
• Protect your eye by wearing glasses, sunglasses or an eye shield at all times.
• Use a clean face cloth and tap water to clean around your eyes. Do not use any pressure.
• You may shower, bath and wash your hair, but do not let any soapy water get into your eye for at least 2 weeks.
• Your vision may not be clear until you receive your new glasses. Blurry vision is normal.
• You may resume most of your activities. Bending over is ok, such as putting on your shoes. You may read, write and watch T.V.

• A feeling of eye strain or pressure in the eye is a warning to stop any activity. Do not lift anything over 10 pounds.
• All activities are usually permitted 1 week after your surgery. Check with your eye surgeon about your activity.
• Ask your eye surgeon when you may return to work or drive a car.
• Please bring all eye medications and any written instructions with you when you visit your eye surgeon.
• Keep follow-up visits with your eye surgeon.
• Do not wear a cotton eye pad anytime after it has been removed.
• Protect your eye by wearing glasses, sunglasses or an eye shield at all times.
• Use a clean face cloth and tap water to clean around your eyes. Do not use any pressure.
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