

PREPARING FOR CATARACT SURGERY



EYE
CONSULTANTS



OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA, PC

DEDICATED TO OUR PATIENTS
COMMITTED TO EXCELLENCE

**Please read this
booklet prior to the
examination by your
doctor.**

CATARACT SURGERY

Thank you for choosing Eye Consultants of Northern Virginia. We strive to provide all the essential information required so that you can make an informed decision regarding surgery and the implant that best suits your lifestyle needs.

GENERAL INFORMATION REGARDING CATARACTS

A cataract is a clouding of the natural lens of the eye. Light enters the eye and is focused through the front structures onto the retina, the seeing tissue which lines the back of the eye. Near the front of the eye is the lens. The lens is solid with a clear outer covering like a piece of plastic wrap. The lens can become cloudy causing blurring, glare or halos around lights. ***The change of the lens from clear to cloudy is a cataract.*** The first treatment for a cataract is a change in glasses. When glasses are no longer able to provide adequate vision for what you need or want to do – such as driving, reading or watching television – the cataract can be removed and replaced with an artificial lens called an intraocular lens implant.

YOUR CATARACT SURGERY EXPERIENCE: WHERE IS SURGERY PERFORMED?

Cataract surgery is performed at an outpatient surgical center. We use two surgical centers located in Fairfax County:

- Fairfax Surgical Center on Main Street in the city of Fairfax
- Northern Virginia Eye Surgery Center on Prosperity Avenue in the Merrifield area.

Your total time at the surgical center on the day of surgery is 2 ½ hours. The surgical coordinator will advise you what time you should arrive for your surgery.

You need someone to drive you on the day of surgery. You cannot drive yourself home and the surgical center will not release you until they are assured that your ride is there.

In most cases, you can drive on the day after surgery. For work purposes, you need to be off on the day of surgery and until after you see the doctor for your first post-operative visit one or two days following surgery. After that, you may return to work unless you work in an area where you are exposed to dust, dirt or fumes. In that case, you should be off work for one week.

WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO TO PREPARE FOR SURGERY?

We want you to have the best surgical experience and outcome, so we ask you to make sure you follow all of the pre-operative and post-operative instructions that are contained in this information sheet and in the folder that you will be given.

First, it is essential that you read all materials thoroughly and well in advance of surgery. As soon as you receive your surgical folder, read it thoroughly and, if you have any questions, contact the surgical coordinator.

Don't be alarmed! There are just a few things you need to take care of before surgery. There is a check list in your surgical folder but this is a summary.

- After your cataract evaluation with the doctor, the surgical coordinator will call you to schedule the cataract surgery. You will also be scheduled for an additional pre-operative appointment for surgical measurements.
- On the day of your measurements, you will purchase a post-operative supply kit which contains sunglasses, temporary over-the-counter reading glasses and other supplies. This kit is \$25 and you will purchase only one even if you are having surgery for both eyes.
- Within 30 days ***prior*** to surgery, you need to see your primary doctor for a medical clearance. You should schedule this appointment as soon as you know your surgery date(s) to assure that you have time to get your clearance. In your surgical folder, you will find a letter to your doctor and a medical clearance form. Be sure to take both of these to your doctor. We ask the doctor to FAX the clearance form and your lab results to the surgical center and to our office.
- Approximately 2 weeks before surgery, our office will send your eye drop prescriptions electronically to your pharmacy. Be sure to pick up your prescriptions and start them according to the directions in your folder. ***Be sure to start your medications as directed three days before surgery!***
- Prior to surgery you should continue all your regular medications and there is ***NO need to stop any medication including aspirin, Plavix, Coumadin or Flomax.*** On the day of surgery, take your regular morning medications with small sips of water unless you have been advised to defer them. If you take a diuretic, we recommend that you not take it on the morning of surgery so that you are comfortable during surgery. ***If you take insulin or any oral hypoglycemic medication, be sure to follow your medical doctor's instructions for them on the day of surgery.***

- You're almost ready for surgery! Here's what you need to remember on the day of surgery. ***First, do not have anything to eat or drink after midnight if your surgery is in the morning.*** If your surgery is in the afternoon, your surgical center will advise of your restrictions for eating or drinking on that morning.
- NOW THIS IS IMPORTANT! ***Take your surgical kit with the sunglasses and all three of your eye drops with you to the surgical center and give them to your doctor.*** The doctor will use your drops after surgery and return the kit to you so that you can continue your drops as instructed.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING & AFTER THE SURGERY?

At the surgical center, you will receive an IV and pre-operative drops to prepare you for surgery. Your eye will be numbed with a topical (eyedrop) anesthetic and you will be given a twilight sedative so that you are very relaxed for the procedure. You will be directed to focus on a fixation light, during which time, you will see a colored light show while the surgeon performs the surgery.

The surgery usually takes 12 to 15 minutes and there is no stitching or patching of the eye.

You will be able to see when you leave the operating room although the vision will be blurry the first day. You will wear sunglasses when you leave the surgical center and afterwards you may go to a restaurant for lunch or go home to relax. You cannot drive on the day of surgery but you may drive on the day after surgery if you feel that the vision is adequate. You need to see your surgeon one to two days post-operatively and two to four weeks later. You will be using eye drops according to the instructions for one month after surgery or according to special instructions by your surgeon.

WHAT IS THE SUCCESS RATE AND RISK OF CATARACT SURGERY?

99 out of 100 patients have recovery of their vision with no complications. In most cases, the surgery has a 99% success rate. There is a 1% complication rate which can include many things – bleeding in the eye at the time of surgery, retinal detachment, infection, dropping a piece of lens material in the back of the eye, drooping of the eyelid. There are many things that can happen, but fortunately, they occur very infrequently. There is a small but real risk of an unsuccessful outcome.

WHAT ARE MY INTRAOCULAR LENS OPTIONS?

A standard monofocal intraocular lens implant has a single-focus optic, and generally the vision is corrected for distance. The patient then wears glasses for reading, computer and other near activities and may need glasses to correct any residual refractive error – astigmatism, nearsightedness or farsightedness. This is a covered service by your insurance company.

Advanced technology intraocular lenses, laser cataract surgery and blended vision are now available which decrease spectacle dependence after surgery. These are advanced options to customize your vision based on your lifestyle needs and are not covered services. You would be responsible for the costs of the non-covered services if you choose any of these options. The total out-of-pocket patient expense for each advanced technology intraocular lens or advanced refractive option is listed in the sections below.

After completion of your examination, the doctor will advise you which options would be available and recommended for you.

OPTIONS TO IMPROVE DISTANCE VISION

- Monofocal intraocular lens (standard IOL)

This implant is covered by your insurance company.

This implant has a single-focus optic and most often the implant power is selected to give the best vision for distance. The distance vision is generally excellent either with no glasses or with glasses to correct any residual refractive error (astigmatism, nearsightedness or farsightedness). Vision for driving at night is excellent. Since this is a single-focus optic, it is necessary to use glasses for reading, computer and other close activities. Sometimes it is necessary to use bifocals for best vision. This implant can be used for all patients.

OPTIONS TO IMPROVE DISTANCE VISION WHEN YOU HAVE ASTIGMATISM

What is Astigmatism? It is when the cornea is oval instead of round and this has to be corrected to improve the uncorrected vision.

- **Toric Intraocular Lens** (Alcon Acrysof Toric IOL)

The total out-of-pocket patient cost for the toric intraocular lens is approximately \$1500 for each eye.

This implant has correction for astigmatism built into the optics, making the patient more independent of glasses for seeing in the distance. It is a

monofocal (single focus) implant; therefore, glasses are required for reading and for other near focusing activities. The toric intraocular lens may be used in combination with blended vision.

- **Femtosecond Laser Assisted Cataract Surgery**

The total out-of-pocket patient cost for this option is \$1400 for each eye.

Femtosecond Laser performs several steps of cataract surgery and can treat small amounts of corneal astigmatism. This improves uncorrected vision and decreases dependence on glasses after surgery by reducing astigmatism. The femtosecond laser does not treat presbyopia so glasses are required for reading and other near activities after surgery. The laser may be used in combination with blended vision. All patients may not be candidates for laser-assisted cataract surgery.

OPTIONS TO IMPROVE DISTANCE AND NEAR VISION

- **Blended Vision Option**

The out-of-pocket patient cost for blended vision is \$925.

Blended vision following cataract surgery is an advanced refractive option with the goal of decreasing dependence on glasses by focusing your dominant eye for distance and your non-dominant eye for closer activities. Using both eyes, you can see for many activities without glasses.

There are limitations to blended vision, and you may require glasses for some functions for both distance and near. In addition, if there is residual astigmatism, the vision could be blurred without correction for all functions. Blended vision is recommended in patients who have healthy eyes and whose only reason for difficulty with seeing is cataracts. Not all patients may be candidates for this advanced refractive modality.

- **Crystalens®** (B & L) Pseudo-accommodating intraocular lens

The total out-of-pocket patient cost for Crystalens® pseudo-accommodating intraocular lenses is approximately \$2400 for each eye.

Crystalens® is a pseudo-accommodating intraocular lens which corrects distance vision and also has the ability to bring near objects into focus by flexing in the eye on a soft hinge. Distance vision and vision for driving at night is usually excellent. The near vision is best for seeing at intermediate distance – such as a computer, at arm's length or on a table or counter. Many patients can read a newspaper or magazine in good lighting without glasses. For fine print such as a paperback book or for sustained reading, mild over-the-counter reading glasses may be required. Crystalens® pseudo-accommodating intraocular lens can be used in patients who have corneal astigmatism. This implant can be used in

MICHAEL H. GOLDBERG, M.D.

EDWARD S. PARELHOFF, M.D.

HARESH AILANI, M.D.

JUDITH GADOL, M.D.

MARISSA L. ALBANO, M.D.

JENNIFER B. DAO, M.D.

ERIC AHN, M.D., M.S.

SPECIALIZING IN

Cataract/ Implant Surgery
Premium Intraocular Lenses
Custom Laser Cataract Surgery

Comprehensive Ophthalmology

Pediatric Ophthalmology
Pediatric/Adult Strabismus Surgery

Oculofacial Aesthetic & Reconstructive Surgery

Corneal Transplant Surgery

Laser Vision Correction
LASIK and PRK

Glaucoma Surgery/Lasers

Eyelid Surgery

Anterior Segment Reconstruction

8134 Old Keene Mill Rd., Suite 300
Springfield, VA 22152
(703) 451-6111
Fax (703) 451-6247

2296 Opitz Blvd., Suite 120
Woodbridge, VA 22191
(703) 670-4700
Fax (703) 670-6096