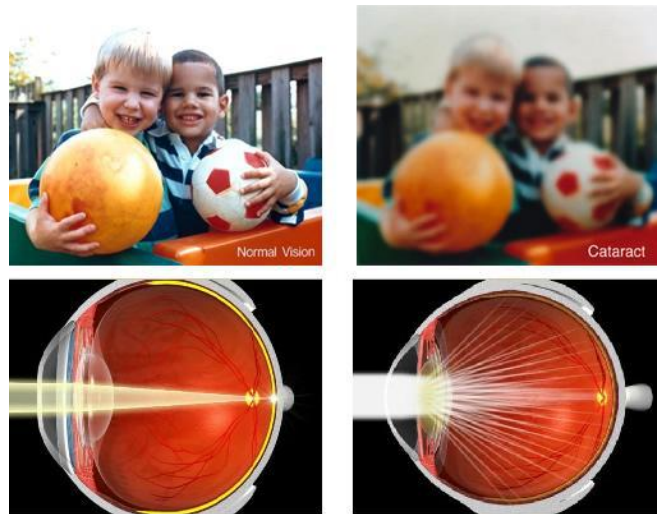


Cataract Surgery

What is a cataract?

A cataract is a clouding of the natural lens in the eye that decreases vision. The lens of the eye is much like the lens of a camera that focuses light on the retina at the back of the eye.



Who gets cataracts?

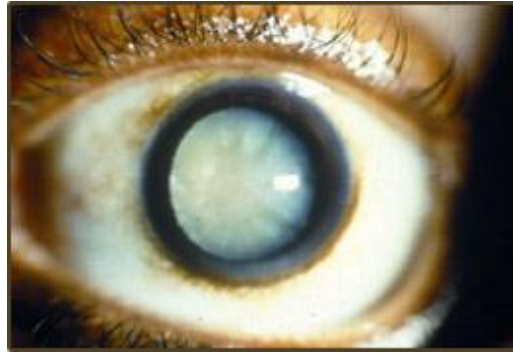
Every person eventually gets cataracts. A cataract can occur in one or both eyes. Most cataracts are related to aging and are very common in elderly people. Cataracts generally start around 60 years of age and progressively worsen over time. Cataract progression can be related to sun-exposure, smoking and diabetes.

How do I know if I have a cataract?

- Cloudy or blurry vision.
- Colors seem faded.
- Glare and halos. Headlights, lamps, or sunlight may appear too bright.
- Poor night vision. Poor distance or near vision.
- Double vision or multiple images.
- Frequent prescription changes in your eyeglasses or contact lenses.

How are cataracts diagnosed?

At Fraser Valley Cataract and Laser (FVCL), our ophthalmologists (eye specialist or surgeon), your optometrist, or medical doctor can diagnose your cataracts through a complete eye examination.



How are cataracts treated?

Cataracts require surgical removal when they interfere with your vision and everyday functioning. The only way to remove cataracts is through a minor procedure at a surgical centre such as at Fraser Valley Cataract and Laser or a hospital. Surgery involves removing the cloudy lens and replacing it with a clear artificial lens. You will never develop another cataract in the operated eye again. We specialize in small-incision techniques to provide the safest cataract surgery.

What types of intra-ocular lenses are used?

With improvements in technology, there are many types of intraocular lenses that can improve vision. At FVCL, we only use the best “soft” foldable lenses that provide the best vision possible. There are many types of soft lenses and they can help improve day and night vision, treat astigmatism, and/or help with distance and near vision. The regular Monofocal aspheric lens will help with day and night distance vision. The Toric aspheric lens additionally helps reduce your astigmatism. Multi-focal lenses help with distance and near vision but can have some issues with glare and halos.

It is important to realize that cataract surgery does not eliminate your use of glasses but can significantly decrease your dependence on them. You will be given more detailed information on the types of intraocular lenses recommended for your eyes.

Is cataract surgery effective?

Cataract surgery is the most common surgery performed in the world. It is one of the safest and most effective surgeries. Approximately 95-98% of people have better vision after cataract surgery. Patients with specific eye diseases may have a guarded prognosis which our eye specialists will discuss with you prior to your eye surgery. If you have glaucoma, you may be eligible for iStent placement during cataract surgery, which will help with your pressure control and may help eliminate your glaucoma eye drops.

What are the risks of cataract surgery?

As with any surgery, cataract surgery poses risks, such as infection and bleeding. A serious complication may occur at a statistical rate of 1 in 1000 patients. A serious complication can result in loss of vision.

What happens before surgery?

Specific tests need to be performed in the office to determine what type of custom-powered intra-ocular lens will be ideally implanted into your eye. The basic covered tests are available, but we always recommend the more advanced measurements which are shown to be much more reliable and accurate for optimal visual results. These advanced tests are not MSP-covered. We will ask that you stop your contact lens wear 2 weeks prior to your tests.

Please inform us if you have any special mobility issues, taking Flomax medication, or are claustrophobic. You will be instructed to start your eye drops 2 days before the surgery day.

What happens on the day of surgery?

Your surgery will be performed at FVCL's surgical centre or the hospital. You will require a driver who can drive you to and from the surgical centre. Please anticipate you will be in the surgical centre for at least 3 hours. You will arrive about 30-45 minutes before your surgery. Several eye drops will be instilled into the eye before your surgery. The surgery itself will only take 10 -15 minutes. It should be entirely pain-free. A clear plastic patch is placed over the eye afterwards. You will have a follow-up appointment at the office on the same day as well as several weeks afterward.

What happens after surgery?

You should expect the eye to be light-sensitive, gritty, teary, and slightly blurry. As the eye heals over the next 1-2 weeks, these symptoms should subside and the vision will improve very

quickly. The eye shield is worn at night for the week. During the day, sunglasses or your normal glasses will help protect the eye. Continue your eye drops as instructed.

Will I require cataract surgery again in the same eye?

No. About 10% of patients will develop some scar tissue behind the implant which will blur the vision several months to years after the surgery. It can be easily fixed with a YAG laser capsulotomy which is a one-minute painless laser procedure in the office.

What if I have glaucoma and cataracts?

Glaucoma and cataracts are separate issues and you should continue your regular glaucoma medications as per usual. New technology allows a special drainage device to be inserted into the drainage angle of your eye to help control your glaucoma called an iStent. It is a very safe procedure that can be done alone or together with your cataract surgery. There is about an 80% chance that we can reduce your eye drop medications if it works well.