

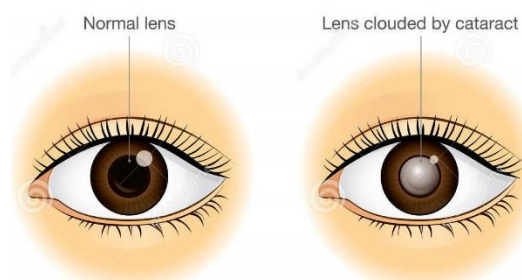
Eye Problems - Cataracts

A cataract is a clouding of the lens in your eye. The cloudiness cuts down the amount of light that gets through the lens, making your vision blurry or foggy. A cataract can occur in either or both eyes. It cannot spread from one eye to the other.

Cataracts are very common in older people and aging is a leading cause of cataracts. However, other things can also lead to cataracts and other eye problems:

- Medications: some chemotherapy drugs, hormone therapy, long term use of steroids, and some medications used to treat the side effects of cancer treatment
- Radiation therapy near the eye
- Damage to the eye from disease or injury
- Inflammation of the eye long-term

Cataracts usually develop slowly but they are progressive and will get worse over time. Blocking ultraviolet (UV) light with sunglasses and a brimmed hat may help slow the development on cataracts.



Symptoms

- Blurry vision, double vision, trouble seeing well at night
- Colors that seem faded
- Seeing a 'halo' around lights or
- Lights seem glaring/too bright

Testing

- Eye chart (visual acuity) test: Determines how well you can see letters/numbers of varying sizes
- Slit-lamp exam: Lets your doctor see a magnified image of the structures in the front of the eye
- Retinal exam/pupil dilation/ ophthalmoscopy: The pupil is widened with special eye drops, to allow your healthcare provider or eye care professional to look more closely at the back of your eye, where the retina is located.
- **Tonometry:** This test checks the fluid pressure in the eye. It is used to test for glaucoma, not cataracts.

Treatment

There is no current medication for cataracts. Surgery can correct the condition when vision is severely affected. In the meantime, doctors recommend wearing glasses and use bright lights.

What you can do

- ✓ Tell your doctor right away if you notice a change in your eyes or vision or if you are having any problems with your eyes (dryness, itchiness, etc.)
- ✓ Using bright lights in your home, particularly if reading smaller print.
- ✓ Have eye exam to see if you need prescription lenses. If not, you can use the magnifying “reader” glasses.
- ✓ Keep your doctor and eye appointments. Follow directions from your providers.
- ✓ If cataracts become severe (lens gets very cloudy) and vision is worsening, see your eye doctor. They may recommend surgery.

When to call your provider

Call your doctor/provider if you

- have sudden severe eye pain, your eye symptoms suddenly get worse, or you lose sight
- see halos around lights or your field of vision, you are suddenly sensitive to the light
- you are taking prescribed medication for an eye problem and you are not better within 3-4 days