

AUGUST: CATARACT AWARENESS MONTH

Cataract surgery has evolved tremendously since the days of our parents and grandparents.

What is a Cataract?

A cataract is a clouding of the natural lens inside the eye that cannot be prevented. This clouding is usually caused by the aging process and often causes images to be blurred, colors to be dull, and may make night driving difficult. Cataract surgery should be considered as soon as the quality of your vision puts limits on your lifestyle.

- *About half of the population has a cataract by age 65, and nearly everyone over 75 has at least one.*

New Surgical Options

Advanced cataract surgery offers different options in the choice of lens implants. Lenses such as ReSTOR, ReZoom and Crystalens are among those designed to provide patients with a full range of vision so they may see objects at far, near, and intermediate distances, often without the need for glasses.

Modern cataract surgery makes use of an amazing array of high-tech equipment and techniques. Gone are the days when cataract surgery required a two week stay in the hospital, with your head immobilized by sandbags until you healed. Today's cataract surgery is an outpatient procedure that takes a half-hour or less and lets you get back to your normal activity level within a few days.

One of the most dramatic advances in cataract surgery involves anesthesia for the procedure. Long ago, patients were put to sleep for cataract surgery. More recently, patients were given a shot behind the eye before surgery to numb it. Now, the vast majority of cataract surgeries are performed under topical anesthesia, with only a few numbing drops placed on your eye before the start of the procedure. This eliminates both the risks and discomforts of the shot. Also, the shot made the vision blurry for several hours after surgery—with just the numbing drops, some patients notice improved vision within minutes after the surgery is completed.

The technique of cataract removal has also undergone major improvements. Once upon a time, the entire cataract was removed as one piece through an incision over half an inch long.

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Please call 703-827-5454 or 877-234-2020 to make an appointment with one of our doctors.

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New Surgical Options, cont.

Currently, cataract surgery is performed through an incision less than an eighth of an inch long. A small instrument is inserted through this tiny incision, and is used to break the cataract into several small pieces that are removed through the micro-incision. There are many advantages to a smaller incision, including a faster recovery time, less need for glasses after surgery, and a smaller risk of infection after surgery. In addition, while the old incisions required many stitches to close the surgical wound, modern cataract surgery can often be performed without any stitches, or with one stitch at most.

During cataract surgery, the cloudy lens of your eye is removed and replaced with a clear lens implant. Originally, there were no implants, and patients had to wear thick glasses (“Coke-bottle glasses”) after surgery to see well. Now there are implants that are placed directly into the eye. The newest implants (called multifocal, accommodating, or toric intraocular lenses) can even provide sharp vision at either distance or up close, or both, depending on the lens choice. This may reduce or eliminate the need for glasses, including reading glasses, after surgery.

Routine cataract surgery is so well tolerated that it has become the most common surgery performed on adults in the United States. As a result of these many high tech developments in all aspects of cataract surgery, the operation is more successful—and has a faster recovery time—than ever before.

One of our doctors would be happy to provide you with detailed information during your examination to help you decide what type of lens is right for you.

See Clearly Vision and Cornea Consultants include multiple medical practices that have served patients in the mid-Atlantic region for over ten years. We offer patients the following services:

- Advanced Cataract Surgery, including specialty lens implants
- All Laser LASIK/Custom LASIK, LASEK, PRK and CK
- Annual Eye Exams
- Botox, Juvéderm, Latisse, and NEOCUTIS (available only through a physician)
- Contact Lenses - cosmetic and therapeutic fitting, including keratoconus
- Corneal Transplants
- Diabetes and Glaucoma Management
- Dry Eye Treatment
- Emergency On-Call Care

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