

Informed Consent for Cataract and Lens Implant surgery

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

This information is given to you to help you make an informed decision about having cataract surgery and/or lens implant surgery. Once you have read this **Informed Consent**, you are encouraged to ask any questions you may still have about the procedure.

2. AN OVERVIEW OF CATARACT AND LENS IMPLANT SURGERY

A cataract occurs when the natural lens of the eye becomes cloudy. The normal lens is clear and helps focus light on the retina in the back of the eye. As a cataract develops, it blocks and scatters light, reducing the quality of vision.

In cataract surgery, the cloudy natural lens of the eye is removed. In almost all cases, the cataract is replaced with a clear artificial lens called an **intraocular lens implant (IOL)**, which is placed permanently inside the eye at the same time the cataract is removed. IOLs are available in different sizes, powers, materials and designs and must be selected by the surgeon depending on the needs of the eye.

An IOL can be inserted later as a separate procedure after a cataract is removed. This may require a different type of IOL than is used if one is placed at the same time the cataract is removed.

3. RISKS AND CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Risks: The risks of cataract surgery include, but are not limited to:

- **Loss of Vision:** Cataract surgery can possibly cause loss of vision or loss of best-corrected vision. This can be due to problems such as infection, scarring, inflammation, or hemorrhage, and if severe can even cause partial or complete loss of vision or loss of the eye. Such severe complications are extremely rare, but can and do occur.
- **Visual Side-Effects:** Visual difficulties and conditions that can occur after cataract surgery include: differences in the power between the two eyes, differences in image size between the two eyes, double vision or ghost images, shadows in the peripheral vision, floaters or flashes of light, and halos or reflections from lights. These problems occur commonly after only one eye has cataract surgery, and may be relieved after both eyes are done.
- **Glasses or Contact Lenses:** Cataract surgery, even with an intraocular lens implant (IOL), does not eliminate the need for glasses. Most patients will have some residual nearsightedness, farsightedness, or astigmatism, and will need glasses for optimal distance and close vision after surgery. Often the glasses strength is fairly low, and some patients feel less dependent on glasses after surgery. However, other patients may find that they need glasses more afterwards. Typically, glasses will not be changed until several weeks after surgery.