

Cataract Surgery

Cataract surgery is an important type of eye surgery that you should learn about as you get older. The chances that you will develop a cataract as you age are quite high. Today, we know a great deal about the causes of a cataract and the types of cataract symptoms that disturb vision. Cataract surgeons (who are Ophthalmologists and Eye Surgeons) report that cataracts have become an increasingly common cause of decreased vision as our population ages and lives longer. In fact, cataracts are the leading cause of vision loss among people over 55. Cataract surgery with an Intraocular Lens Implant (IOL) is one of the most frequent types of operations performed in the U.S. today. This may be a reflection of the changing demographics of our population. In 2006, 80 million “baby boomers” began turning 60 and it is estimated that in 2011 there were 40 million people above the age of 65 in our population-and by 2020 there will be close to 55 million! In the United States, the incidence of senile cataract has been reported to be approximately 42% in those aged 52 to 64, 60% in those aged 65 to 74 and 91% in those aged 75 to 85.

Fortunately, if you are bothered by the symptoms of cataracts, they are readily treatable. Cataract surgeons and patients have benefited from advances in technology, making cataract surgery and Intraocular Lens Implants (IOL) not only one of the most frequently performed types of eye surgery but also one of the safest and effective types of surgery available in the United States today. Cataract surgery recovery is usually quite uneventful and cataract surgery problems and complications are infrequent.

Each year cataract surgeons in the United States provide cataract surgery to a growing number of patients. They successfully perform more than 3 million cataract operations and restore vision after cataract surgery by implanting tiny, permanent artificial Intraocular Lens Implants or IOLs to achieve vision correction after surgery. The short recovery time after cataract surgery allows the vast majority of patients to resume their everyday activities within a day or so after their cataract procedure.

For most people, the cost of cataract surgery is partially or completely covered by private insurance or Medicare, making cataract surgery costs a manageable expense. Patients considering cataract surgery should note that although the cataract surgery costs are covered, Medicare and most private insurances only cover the basic cost of a monofocal intraocular lens implant

The technology of cataract surgery is truly amazing. Modern cataract surgery is usually performed using a microsurgical technique called “phacoemulsification” whereby the cataract is gently “chopped up” and “suctioned” to remove it. There are many technological advances in Phacoemulsification that have enabled skilled cataract Surgeons to perform cataract surgery and provide Lens Implants through very tiny incisions requiring only eye drops, rather than needles or injections for anesthesia and without the need for stitches or a patch after the surgery. This allows patients to have a very quick visual recovery.

The technology of Lens Implants (IOL) has also improved dramatically. During the initial 15 years or so that Lens Implants were used for vision correction after cataract surgery they were designed and

manufactured out of rigid materials and required a modest but significant incision in order to be implanted. Today, Lens Implants are manufactured from flexible and foldable materials allowing cataract surgeons to implant or “inject” them through very tiny incisions. The incisions are so small that they do not even require stitches or sutures to close them.

If you are interested in cataract surgery please contact our office at 217-366-1250 to arrange for a consultation with one of our cataract surgeons.