

# Cataract Surgery FAQs

## Frequently asked questions about cataract surgery

We hope we have provided some answers below to your most common questions about cataract surgery New Jersey and New York. If you have a question that isn't answered here, feel free to contact us at [5th Avenue Eye Center](#). One of our cataract specialists will be happy to provide you with an answer. If, after reading through the FAQs, you would like to schedule a no-obligation consultation with Ilan Cohen MD to find out about your cataract surgery options, click here to [schedule an appointment](#).



### What is a cataract?

A [cataract](#) is the clouding of the lens in the eye. Cataracts can occur gradually over time or they can be present at birth. Most commonly, though, cataracts affect older Americans above age 60. In fact, estimates indicate that more than half of all Americans over the age of 80 have cataracts or have had surgery to correct them. This condition is widely accepted as a natural part of the aging process.

### Can a cataract come back after surgery?

No. Once the lens has been completely removed, a cataract cannot form on the implanted lens. It is important to note, however, that lens capsule (the tissue bag surrounding the replacement lens) can become clouded over time and can mimic [symptoms](#) of a cataract. In these cases, a very simple outpatient procedure called a YAG laser capsulotomy is needed to create a hole for light to pass through the lens again.

### If I have an old-fashioned, monofocal lens put in my eyes, can I change it at a later time?

The answer is, generally, no. Once the lens is put in, it's going to be very difficult to change it because tissue will heal around it.

### Do I need to wait until my cataracts mature before surgery?

No. Old-fashioned surgeons used to remove the cataract through a large incision made into the eye. The cataract would then be expelled from the eye by manual pressure (like a pimple) and a lens implant would be inserted. The closure of this wound required many sutures and took a long time to heal. This process would require a hard or "mature" lens, so that it would come out in one piece. Using modern sutureless cataract surgery techniques actually works much better and with [less trauma](#) to surrounding tissues when the lens is softer. Therefore, a mature lens is no longer a requirement. However, the surgeon does need to verify that the cataracts are visually significant.

## **What causes cataracts and how do they form?**

The lens of the eye is responsible for passing light through to the retina which, in turn, reflects images to our brain so that we can see properly. A cataract is formed when the soft, flexible tissue of the lens goes through a state change and begins to cloud over due to a variety of [causes](#), including prolonged exposure to the sun, smoking and diabetes. When the lens gets cloudy due to cataracts, light can't pass through effectively and objects become fuzzy and out of focus. Left untreated, cataracts can become very dense, causing blindness.

## **What happens during cataract surgery?**

During [cataract surgery](#), Dr. Cohen will use a phacoemulsification (ultrasound) device to break up the affected lens with high-frequency sound waves. The tissue is then washed away and an intraocular lens (IOL) is inserted in its place. IOLs are either monofocal (one distance) or multifocal (all distance) and allow your eye to properly interpret light in order to produce clear, crisp images, often without the need for eyeglasses. Some patients may still need glasses, however, particularly with monofocal lens replacement.

## **Is cataract surgery painful?**

No. Most of our patients report little to no discomfort during or [after cataract surgery](#). During surgery, you will be given anesthetic drops to numb your eyes. Afterwards, you can take over-the-counter pain medications if you feel any pain or irritation.

## **What are the benefits of cataract surgery?**

Cataract surgery improves vision to what it was before cataracts. If multifocal IOLs are implanted, then you can even improve your vision beyond what it used to be. This procedure has a 98% success rate and can improve your overall quality of life.

## **What are the risks of cataract surgery?**

As with any surgical procedure, there are some risks. Millions of people have safely undergone cataract surgery, but there have been a small number of complications reported. We will take the time to discuss the risks with you during your no-obligation consultation at the [5th Avenue Eye Center](#).

## **Do I have to stop using blood thinners such as Coumadin, Aspirin, Plavix etc.?**

No, unless you are specifically notified otherwise by the physician.

## **Will my glasses prescription change after surgery?**

Yes. You will certainly need a new prescription since the improvement in your vision could be very significant.

## **What will I do with my glasses after the surgery?**

Glasses will be prescribed after your eye/s have been stabilized following surgery. This usually take several weeks. In the meanwhile, you can just use over-the-counter readers for help with reading if needed (you may not need this if you had a next generation lens inserted).

## **What do I do with my glasses after my first eye is done, while waiting for the second eye?**

You can either take out the glass in front of the operated eye, keep wearing your glasses as they are, or just not wear them; whichever feels more comfortable for you.

## **I feel a foreign body sensation (scratchy feeling) in my eye after the surgery. Should I be concerned?**

No. This can happen after the surgery, especially in patients with dry eyes. There is absolutely no cause for concern. You can use artificial tears to alleviate the feeling.

## **I can't see clearly the next day after surgery, whereas my friend saw perfectly the first day after his. Is this normal?**

]Yes. There might be some swelling of your corneas after the surgery, and it may last anywhere from a few days to a few weeks. It depends largely on the extent of your cataract and the amount of ultrasound energy that was needed to remove it. Just be patient and use the drops as instructed.

## **I felt like the surgery on my second eye was different than on the first, why?**

This subjective feeling is very common and not a cause for concern. If there is any significant difference between the two surgeries or any unusual complications, your surgeon will tell you. Otherwise, there's no cause for worry.

## **Do I need to wear the dark glasses?**

No. They are provided for your comfort after the surgery since your eyes are dilated and sensitive to light, but you don't have to use them.

## **Are there any restrictions after surgery?**

No. You may resume your daily activities including bending and lifting. Just refrain from immersing your head in swimming pools or hot tubs for the first week. Routine showering is allowed.

[Schedule a FREE Consultation!](#)

