



aecp

the armenian eyecare project
bringing sight to armenian eyes

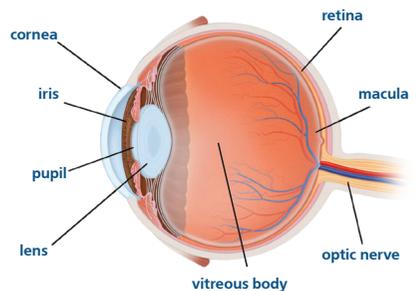


CATARACT

Magnification in the eye is mainly done by the cornea and to a lesser extent by the lens located within the eye. The lens is usually clear like water but if clouded the condition is called cataract, which means “waterfall” in Latin. It relates to the appearance of frothy water that is how the lens appears when the cataract is mature. Cataract causes gradual painless loss of vision.

Symptoms

A cataract starts out small. It has little effect on vision at first. You may notice that your vision is blurred a little, like looking through a cloudy piece of glass. A cataract may make light from the sun or a lamp seem too bright, causing a glare. Or, you may notice when you drive at night that the oncoming headlights cause more glare than before-or are blinding and cause you to see “halos”. Also, colors may not appear as bright to you as they once did.



Factors for Cataract Development

Cataracts are associated with the use of tobacco products, some drugs use –Steroid in eye drops, tablets or injections. Chemotherapeutics can accelerate cataract development as can radiation. Avoidance of these items is considered beneficial to the eyes.

The only way to know for sure is by having an eye examination. Should your eye care professional find one, he or she can monitor it and advise you about any future treatment.

Detection

Cataract Treatment



It is treated with surgery. There is a danger in delaying treatment or waiting too long to have a cataract removed, which will be complicated by increase of intraocular pressure and the development of glaucoma. Cataracts are also easier to remove in the early stages. Better surgical techniques are available than with “ripe” cataracts

and there is less risk of complications.

Your eye care professional will remove your clouded lens and, in most cases, replace it with a clear, plastic lens. Vision is restored to near-normal and usually no follow-up care or additional surgeries are required.

Cataract surgery is very successful in restoring vision if no other eye diseases you have at the same time.

If you are over age 60, you should have an eye examination at least once every two years.

This exam should include dilating your pupils. This means drops are put into your eyes to enlarge your pupils. Although a cataract can be detected without dilated pupils, your eye care professional can see the back of your eye better using this exam getting a good view of the retina to detect any other eye diseases – age-related macular degeneration, glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy.

