

## Cataract

### Definition:

A clouding or loss of transparency of the normally clear lens of the eye located directly behind the iris. Cataract is a condition in which the lens of the eye becomes progressively opaque, which scatters and blocks the light as it passes through the lens, resulting in blurred vision. It can affect people of all ages. It is the leading cause of complete or partial blindness.

### Causes:

Cataract occurs due to a number of causes, including:

- Ageing.
- Genetics.
- Changes to the tissue that makes up the eye's lens due to a blow or sharp eye injury.
- Eye infections.
- Some chronic diseases such as diabetes.
- Certain medications such as cortisone.
- Children can develop cataract due to genetic factors. Cataract may also occur at birth due to intrauterine infections.

### Symptoms:

Signs and symptoms of cataract may differ from person to person. The most common symptoms include:

- Gradual visual impairment without pain.
- Unclear clouded vision .
- Sensitivity to bright light.
- Blurred or dim vision .
- In advanced cases, the lens may gradually turn white.

### Risk factors:

Factors that increase the risk of cataract include:

- Ageing.
- Diabetes.
- Smoking.
- High blood pressure.
- Obesity-related diseases.

### Diagnosis:

To diagnose cataract, your doctor will review your medical history and symptoms, and perform an eye examination.

### Treatment:

When cataract affects the lens it may lead to partial or total vision loss, on this case, the only effective treatment for cataract is surgery: Cataract surgery involves removing the clouded lens and replacing it with a clear artificial lens, and It remains a permanent part of the eye. This procedure is done in a number of ways depending on the case.

### Frequently asked questions:

#### 1. Is it true that cataract cannot be treated if the lens becomes completely dimmed?

This is a misconception, this case can also be treated with same-day cataract surgery that is performed under a local anaesthetic. Cataract surgery is very common and is generally a safe procedure.

#### 2. Is cataract caused by a white fluid in the eye?

This is a misconception, cataract is a loss of transparency of the normally clear lens of the eye.

**3. Is cataract contagious?**

No, cataract is not contagious and it cannot spread from one eye to the other or from person to person.

**4. Does eyestrain due to frequent reading cause cataract?**

No, this is not true.

**5. Is cataract accompanied by itching and eye redness?**

No, this is not true.

**6. Can cataract be treated with eyedrops alone?**

Surgery is the only effective treatment for cataract.

**7. Is it true that only advanced cases of cataract are eligible for surgery?**

No, cataract surgery can be performed immediately after diagnosis.

**8. Does cataract ultimately lead to permanent blindness?**

No, vision usually can be successfully restored with cataract surgery and implantation of an intraocular lens.

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