

CATARACT SURGERY



SOURCE : ISTOCK

PATIENT INFORMATION

You are about to undergo cataract surgery because your crystalline lens (the natural lens of the eye) is opacified. This alters your vision, affecting your daily activities. Surgery is the only option to remedy this problem. If you decide not to have surgery, your vision will continue to deteriorate. This surgery does not correct other causes of vision loss such as glaucoma, macular degeneration or diabetes. This information pamphlet will help you to be better informed. Here are answers to some of your questions.

What does this surgery consist of?

- It consists of removing the cataract from the eye. It will be broken into fragments and sucked out through a small incision which most often seals itself and rarely requires stitches (phacoemulsification technique).
- Once the cataract is removed, a new artificial lens (intraocular lens) will be permanently implanted inside the eye.
- A local anesthetic will be administered at the time of surgery in the form of drops or ointment. An anesthetic injection may also be used.
- You will not be asleep for the surgery; you can eat and take your medications as usual the morning of the surgery.

How long does the surgery last?

- The surgery lasts approximately 15 minutes.

What are possible complications?

- Like all surgical interventions or procedures, cataract surgery carries risks and can lead to complications or ineffective results.

The following are some possible complications:

Minor complications (rare)

- Bleeding in the white of the eye (conjunctiva) or eyelid
- Increased sensitivity to light and presence of halos
- Increased inflammation inside the eye
- Increased intraocular pressure (inside the eye)
- Increased need for glasses after surgery (refractive surprises)
- Double vision
- Droopy eyelid

Serious complications (very rare)

- Bleeding from the back of the eye (retina or choroid)
- Infection inside the eye
- Rupture of the natural lens support (capsule)
- Swelling of the cornea or retina
- Detachment of the retina
- Loss of vision
- Movement of the artificial lens
- Pupillary deformation
- Incomplete extraction of the cataract

How should I prepare myself?

- Avoid wearing contact lenses for 3 days prior to the surgery.
- Start the prescribed drops in the eye to be operated on 3 days before the surgery, if prescribed by the surgeon beforehand.
- Continue to use glaucoma treatment drops unless otherwise specified by the ophthalmologist. However, you must use new bottles.
- Have your pharmacist prepare a list of your medications (pharmaceutical profile). You must give it to the nurse before the surgery.

How to apply ophthalmological drops

1. Wash your hands.
2. Shake the bottle before applying the drops.
3. Look up.
4. Pull the lower eyelid down to form a small depression between the eyelid and the eye.
5. Squeeze the bottle and let a drop fall into the eye's small depression.
6. Wait at least 5 minutes between drops in the same eye.

Warning: Avoid all contact between the bottle tip and the eye, your fingers or any surface which could contaminate the contents of the bottle. When treatment is completed, or after 1 month, throw the bottle out. Open bottles must be used only for a single eye. If both eyes are being operated on, you must use a separate bottle for each eye.

What should I do on the day of the operation?

- Call to report any condition which might interfere with the smooth functioning of the operation (e.g., cough, redness of the eyes, stye on the eyelid). A member of the team will call you back to give you another appointment for the surgery.
- Have someone accompany you as you cannot drive on the day of the operation.
- Expect to remain at the hospital for 2 to 3 hours.
- Wear comfortable clothes that are easy to take off.
- Have a light breakfast.
- Take your medications as usual, even blood thinners, unless told otherwise by the ophthalmologist.
- Put in your eye drops if they are prescribed and required by the ophthalmologist.
- Avoid makeup, creams and facial care products.
- Remove earrings.
- Bring a snack, especially if you have diabetes.

■ How do I manage pain and other symptoms AFTER surgery?

- It is normal to feel an itching sensation or “grains of sand” in the eye after the operation. Use of artificial tears 4 to 6 times a day may relieve the discomfort. (Use a new bottle and use it only for the eye that was operated on).

Warning: Wait 30 minutes after applying the medicated drops before using artificial tears.

- If you have a headache after the surgery, you can take acetaminophen tablets (Tylenol™).
- Avoid putting bandages, tissues or paper towels on the eye that was operated on. Use only the shield provided to you after the operation for eye protection.

■ Should I take any precautions after the examination and are there symptoms I should watch for?

Wound

- You will get a protective shield after the operation. You need to wear it while sleeping for 7 nights following the operation.
- To avoid rubbing your eyes during the day, it is recommended that you wear the protective shield and your glasses.

Staples and stitches

- Stitches are rarely used during the procedure. If they are used, they will be easily removed by the surgeon in the outpatient clinic.

Walking and physical exercise

- It is important to remain calm and to rest the day after the operation.
- Walking is permitted after the procedure.
- Keep your head higher than your heart for 1 week.
- Do not lift weights greater than 20 lb for 1 week.

- Moderate sexual activity is allowed but avoid intense effort for 1 week.
- Contact sports and those that risk eye injury are prohibited (e.g.: badminton, racquetball) for 1 month.
- Avoid swimming in a pool or using a spa for 1 month.

Note: For any questions about returning to specific activities, ask your ophthalmologist.

Shower and bath

- Avoid wetting your face and keep the water spray below your shoulders for 1 week.
- Wash your face with a clean and well wrung out washcloth while closing the eye that was operated on.
- Wash your hair with your head tilted back; avoid having the water run over your face.

Driving

- Avoid driving for a minimum of 48 hours.
- If your vision is blurred or you feel unsteady avoid driving and wait for the ophthalmologist's approval before starting to drive again.

Glasses

- For your comfort, wearing sunglasses after the surgery is recommended, especially if you are sensitive to light.
- Your prescription glasses must be changed 4 to 6 weeks after surgery on your second eye. Make an appointment with an optometrist.
- Reading glasses can help you temporarily. Speak to an optometrist.
- In the meantime, you can remove the lens from its frame on the side of the eye that was operated on, or you can wear your old glasses if they are comfortable.

Other

- Normally you will have excellent vision the following day, but it may take several days to recover.

- You can go about your usual daily activities such as reading, watching television, cooking, etc.
- Avoid handling soil, cutting the grass, gardening, raking leaves or shovelling snow for 2 weeks.
- Avoid cleaning an animal's litter or touching an animal for 2 weeks.

Summary of recommendations

Recommendations following cataract surgery

- Be vigilant in your movements and activities; you could hurt yourself by poorly judging obstacles.
- Protect your eye with the protective shield or glasses during the first 7 nights.
- Use new bottles of drops and follow the prescription until the end.
- Wash your hands often and avoid touching the eye that was operated on.

Restrictions following cataract surgery

- Avoid applying pressure, rubbing or squeezing your eyes hard shut (approximately 1 month).
- Avoid activities with a risk of impact (approximately 1 month).
- Avoid coughing and blowing your nose hard (approximately 1 month).
- Avoid exposing your eyes to dust, water or any other substance that risks contaminating your eyes (approximately 1 month).
- Avoid applying makeup to your eyelids after the surgery (approximately 1 month).
- Do not work with soil or in the garden (approximately 2 weeks).
- Do not pick any animals up in your arms or change their litter (approximately 2 weeks).

Appointments following surgery

- All postoperative appointments are **compulsory**.
- Please bring your bottles of drops and your list of medications to every postoperative appointment.
- An ophthalmologist must see you again the day following your operation and you must be accompanied.
- Based on agreement with the ophthalmologist, a 2nd visit is **required** 1 to 2 weeks following the surgery, either with your ophthalmologist or your optometrist.

<p>1st visit</p> <p>The day after the operation</p>	<p>Clinique externe d'ophtalmologie de l'Hôpital de Saint-Jérôme</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Pavillon Rosaire-Lapointe 190 Rue Saint-Marc Saint-Jérôme, QC J7Z 2V8</p>
	<p>Clinique d'ophtalmologie de Saint-Jérôme</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Suite 203 305 Rue du Docteur-Charles-Léonard Saint-Jérôme, QC J7Z 5H9</p>
	<p>Centre de services ambulatoires de Boisbriand</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 4800 Rue Ambroise-Lafortune Boisbriand, QC J7E 4H5</p>
	<p>Clinique externe d'ophtalmologie du Centre multiservices de santé et de services sociaux de Sainte-Agathe</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Located on the ground floor (RC) 234 Rue Saint-Vincent Sainte-Agathe-des-Monts, QC J8C 2B5</p>
	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____</p>
<p>2nd visit</p>	<p>With an optometrist, 1 to 2 weeks after the operation, unless otherwise specified by the ophthalmologist</p>
<p>3rd visit</p>	<p>With an optometrist, 4 to 6 weeks after the operation</p>

Information to record

First eye operation: <input type="checkbox"/> Left <input type="checkbox"/> Right			Second eye operation: <input type="checkbox"/> Left <input type="checkbox"/> Right		
Date of 1st operation: _____			Date of 2nd operation: _____		
Postoperative follow-up	Date <i>(yyyy/mm/dd)</i>	Time <i>(hh:mm)</i>	Postoperative follow-up	Date <i>(yyyy/mm/dd)</i>	Time <i>(hh:mm)</i>
1st appointment	_____	_____	1st appointment	_____	_____
2nd appointment	_____	_____	2nd appointment	_____	_____
3rd appointment	_____	_____	3rd appointment	_____	_____

Name of the ophthalmologist who operated

Dr. _____

Dr. _____

■ When should I go to the Emergency Room?

- Severe pain in the eye that was operated on
- Increased redness
- Reduced vision
- Serious headaches

■ Who should I call in case of emergency?

Call Info-Santé at 811 – Available 24/7

OR

Go to your hospital's emergency room and tell the ER doctor that you recently had surgery on the eye

Have a good stay with us and a good recovery!

www.santelaurentides.gouv.qc.ca

Hôpital de Mont-Laurier: 819-623-1234

2561 Chemin de la Lièvre sud, Mont-Laurier, QC J9L 3G3

Hôpital de Saint-Eustache : 1-888-234-3837

520 Boul. Arthur-Sauvé, Saint-Eustache, QC J7R 5B1

**Centre multiservices de santé et de services sociaux
de Sainte-Agathe: 1-855-766-6387**

234 Rue Saint-Vincent, Sainte-Agathe-des-Monts, QC J8C 2B8

Hôpital de Saint-Jérôme : 1-866-963-2777

290 Rue De Montigny, Saint-Jérôme, QC J7Z 5T3

Hôpital d'Argenteuil : 450-562-3761

Centre multiservices

de santé et de services sociaux d'Argenteuil

145 Avenue de la Providence, Lachute, QC J8H 4C7

References

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- CIUSSS de l’Est-de-l’Île-de-Montréal, Hôpital Maisonneuve-Rosemont (2016), “Chirurgie de la cataracte, soins et recommandations suite à votre chirurgie” (cataract surgery, care and recommendations following your operation), consulted on December 28, 2020, <https://biblio.hmr.qc.ca/in/ciup/faces/details.xhtml;jsessionid=6801E3B34C517CE826088E7E4EFDE1B9?id=h::b49f93db-6c79-4f05-a1a5-b6399aa21031>
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- Direction des soins infirmiers, CHU de Québec, Université Laval (2017), “Guide d’enseignement, Chirurgie d’un jour, informations générales avant et après la chirurgie” (teaching guide, day surgery, general information before and after the operation), consulted on December 28, 2020, https://www.chudequebec.ca/getmedia/80c01b3a-1c6c-4a13-ae77-4f807626de49/823_01_002_Chirurgie_1_jour_Avant_et_Apres_PDF.aspx