

Ophthalmology - Cataract Surgery

Introduction

The Covid pandemic has had a significant impact on the NHS ability to provide routine elective services. We recognise that patients are waiting longer than we would all like and it is not always possible to identify when treatment will take place. This document provides you with information on how you are able to support yourself while waiting to attend the hospital. The guidance has been written by clinicians who are responsible for your care.

Please read the following information in conjunction with the staying healthy guidance appropriate for your condition.

Cataract in simple terms is the clouding or opacity of the lens within the eye. It is helpful to learn about how the eye works in order to understand what a cataract is.

The natural lens of the eye is a transparent flexible structure suspended in the middle of the eye. The function of the lens is to focus light onto the back of the eye (retina) which sends messages to the brain allowing us to see. It also helps to focus on objects at various distances. A muscle in the eye pulls on the lens, changing its shape slightly, and this allows the eye to change focus. When cataract develops, the lens becomes cloudy and prevents the light rays from passing through.

Cataracts usually develop slowly over years causing a gradual blurring of vision, which eventually is not correctable by glasses. Cataracts usually develop in both eyes at the same time though the progression between the two eyes may vary.

The most common cause of cataract is advancing age, however cataract can also be congenital (present at birth). It can also be caused by some medications (eg: steroids), eye surgery, eye injury or caused by other less common causes.

What are the symptoms of Cataract?

Symptoms include dim, blurred or discoloured vision or double vision. These problems can make it hard to read, work on a computer, watch television, drive and do anything else that calls for clear eyesight. You could get glare in bright lights, multiple images of an object and lack of balance between the two eyes. Driving in low light may become difficult and if vision is affected in both eyes then it could lead to vision level dropping below the legal standard for driving.

My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

Guidance for Patients

What treatment is available if I am affected by Cataract?

The only treatment for cataract is surgery. It is intended to improve the clarity and quality of your vision and may also improve the doctor's view of the back of the eye. Occasionally you might need to get surgery even if your cataract doesn't bother you. Your doctor may suggest it if the cataract makes it hard to get a clear view of the back of the eye during an eye exam, or if the cataract narrows the front part of the eye, putting your eye at risk of acute glaucoma.

Are there any alternate treatments available?

Surgery is usually recommended when up to date glasses or contact lenses do not help enough, and the reduced vision is interfering with your daily activities or lifestyle. If you do not have a problem with your vision or do not wish to have surgery for cataract then, in most cases, it can be left alone after discussion with your clinician.

What should I do if my health is deteriorating?

For emergency/ very urgent concerns please contact 02476964800 or relevant secretary

Contact Us

02476966606 or relevant secretary