

COMPLICATIONS OF CATARACT SURGERY

Modern cataract surgery is a very commonly performed, safe procedure with proven benefit. However, it is a real operation and complications can and do occur. In the absence of any other pre-existing eye problems, 92% of patients can expect to achieve driving vision or better. Glasses may be required to achieve this.

Complications can occur during or after surgery.

Some Possible Complications during the Operation/Administration of Anaesthetic:

- Tearing of the back part of the lens capsule with disturbance of the gel inside the eye that may sometimes result in reduced vision.
- Loss of all or part of the cataract into the back of the eye, requiring a further operation which may require a general anaesthetic.
- Bleeding inside or behind the eye.
- Perforation of eye by anaesthetic needle.

Some Possible Complications after the Operation:

- Floaters
- Flat surfaces look like they slope
- Inflammation inside the eye
- High pressure inside the eye
- Posterior capsule opacification (see below)
- Incorrect strength or dislocation of the implant
- Clouding of the cornea
- Swelling of the retina - macular oedema
- Detached retina
- Infection inside the eye
- Allergy to the medication used

Possible sensations after surgery:

These are not usually serious and resolve by themselves.

- Bruising of the eye or eyelids
- Flickering vision
- Glare
- Double vision
- Foreign body sensation
- Watery eye
- Feeling of imbalance

Most of these are transient and do not affect the visual outcome of the operation. Serious complications are rare and in most cases can be treated effectively. Nevertheless, some complications may result in permanently reduced vision. In a small proportion of cases, further surgery may be needed. Very rarely, some complications can result in blindness.

The most common complication is "posterior capsule opacification". It may come on gradually after months or years. When this happens, the back part of the lens capsule, which was left in the eye to support the implant, becomes cloudy. This interferes with light reaching the retina. This may result in blurred vision, glare sensitivity or double vision.

To treat this, a laser beam is used to make a small opening in the cloudy membrane. This is a painless procedure, which can be done in the consulting rooms. If you require this treatment, you will be given more information beforehand and you will have the opportunity to discuss this fully with Dr Workman.

If you have any questions or you are unsure about any part of your proposed operation, please discuss it with Dr Workman before your operation.

I, _____ have read and understood the above
Signed _____ Date _____