



[Home](#) → [Health Topics](#) → Cataract

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Cataract

A cataract is a clouding of the lens in your eye. It affects your vision. Cataracts are very common in older people. By age 80, more than half of all Americans either have a cataract or have had cataract surgery.


A cataract can occur in either or both eyes. It cannot spread from one eye to the other. Common symptoms are:

- Blurry vision
- Colors that seem faded
- Glare - headlights, lamps or sunlight may seem too bright. You may also see a halo around lights.
- Not being able to see well at night
- Double vision
- Frequent prescription changes in your eye wear

Cataracts usually develop slowly. New glasses, brighter lighting, anti-glare sunglasses or magnifying lenses can help at first. Surgery is also an option. It involves removing the cloudy lens and replacing it with an artificial lens. Wearing sunglasses and a hat with a brim to block ultraviolet sunlight may help to delay cataracts.

NIH: National Eye Institute

Start Here

- **Facts about Cataract** [<https://www.nei.nih.gov/learn-about-eye-health/eye-conditions-and-diseases/cataracts>]
 (National Eye Institute)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.nei.nih.gov/espanol/aprenda-sobre-la-salud-ocular/enfermedades-y-afecciones-de-los-ojos/cataratas>]
- **What Are Cataracts?** [<https://www.aao.org/eye-health/diseases/what-are-cataracts>] (American Academy of Ophthalmology)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.aao.org/salud-ocular/enfermedades/que-son-las-cataratas>]

Diagnosis and Tests

- **Dilating Eye Drops** [<https://www.aapos.org/glossary/dilating-eye-drops>]
(American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus)
- **Eye Exam and Vision Testing Basics** [<https://www.aao.org/eye-health/tips-prevention/eye-exams-101>]
(American Academy of Ophthalmology)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.aao.org/salud-ocular/consejos/examenes-de-los-ojos-101>]
- **Preoperative Testing** [<https://www.aao.org/eye-health/news/choosing-wisely-preoperative-testing>]
(American Academy of Ophthalmology)

Treatments and Therapies

- **Cataract Surgery** [<https://www.aao.org/eye-health/diseases/what-is-cataract-surgery>] (American Academy of Ophthalmology)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.aao.org/salud-ocular/enfermedades/cataratas-cirugia>]

Cataract surgery - series -- Normal anatomy [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/presentations/100079_1.htm]

(Medical Encyclopedia)

Also in Spanish [https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/esp_presentations/100079_1.htm]


- IOL Implants: Lens Replacement after Cataracts (Intraocular Lenses) [<https://www.aao.org/eye-health/diseases/cataracts-iol-implants>] (American Academy of Ophthalmology)

Also in Spanish [<https://www.aao.org/salud-ocular/enfermedades/cataratas-implantes-de-lio>]



Related Issues

- Facts and Myths about Cataracts [https://preventblindness.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/MK08_Cataract_Facts_0.pdf] (Prevent Blindness America) - **PDF**
- Intraocular Lens Dislocation [<https://www.asrs.org/patients/retinal-diseases/27/intraocular-lens-dislocation>] (American Society of Retina Specialists)
- Retained Lens Fragments [<https://www.asrs.org/patients/retinal-diseases/23/retained-lens-fragments>] (American Society of Retina Specialists)

Specifics

- Cloudy Vision? It Could be Cataracts [<https://newsinhealth.nih.gov/2022/09/cloudy-vision>]  (National Institutes of Health)
- What Do Cataracts Look Like? [<https://www.aao.org/eye-health/diseases/cataracts-pictures-videos>] (American Academy of Ophthalmology)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.aao.org/salud-ocular/enfermedades/fotografias-y-videos-de-cataratas>]


Genetics

- Autosomal dominant optic atrophy and cataract: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/autosomal-dominant-optic-atrophy-and-cataract>]  (National Library of Medicine)
- Hyperferritinemia-cataract syndrome: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/hyperferritinemia-cataract-syndrome>]  (National Library of Medicine)


Images

- Cataracts [<https://skinsight.com/skin-conditions/cataracts/?lmiw9cApI=1>] (VisualDX)



Videos and Tutorials

- Cataract [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/anatomyvideos/000024.htm>]  (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/anatomyvideos/000024.htm>]

Statistics and Research

- Eye Health Data and Statistics [<https://www.nei.nih.gov/learn-about-eye-health/eye-health-data-and-statistics>]  (National Eye Institute)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.nei.nih.gov/espanol/aprenda-sobre-la-salud-ocular/datos-y-estadisticas-relacionadas-con-la-salud-ocular>]

Clinical Trials

- ClinicalTrials.gov: Cataract [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Cataract%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)
- ClinicalTrials.gov: Lenses, Intraocular [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Lenses,+Intraocular%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)



Journal Articles

References and abstracts from MEDLINE/PubMed (National Library of Medicine)



- Article: Combined Cataract and Vitrectomy Surgery in Pediatric Patients. [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40731806>]

- Article: Femtosecond laser-assisted cataract surgery versus conventional phacoemulsification cataract surgery: a meta-analysis... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40731148>]
- Article: A two-stage multi-scale attention-based network for weakly supervised cataract fundus image... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40730847>]
- Cataract -- see more articles [<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=%22Cataract%22%5Bmajr%3Anoexp%5D+AND+humans%5Bmh%5D+AND+english%5Bla%5D+AND+%22last+2+Years%22+%5Bedat%5D+NOT+%28letter%5Bpt%5D+OR+case+reports%5Bpt%5D+OR+editorial%5Bpt%5D+OR+comment%5Bpt%5D%29+AND+free+full+text%5Bsb%5D+>]

Reference Desk

- How the Eyes Work [<https://www.nei.nih.gov/learn-about-eye-health/healthy-vision/how-eyes-work>]  (National Eye Institute)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.nei.nih.gov/espanol/aprenda-sobre-la-salud-ocular/vision-saludable/como-funcionan-los-ojos>]
- NEI for Kids: Glossary [<https://www.nei.nih.gov/learn-about-eye-health/nei-for-kids/glossary>]  (National Eye Institute)

Find an Expert

- American Foundation for the Blind [<https://www.afb.org/>]
- Find an Ophthalmologist [<https://secure.aao.org/aao/find-ophthalmologist>] (American Academy of Ophthalmology)
Also in Spanish [<https://secure.aao.org/aao/encontrar-oftalmologo>]
- Finding an Eye Doctor [<https://www.nei.nih.gov/learn-about-eye-health/healthy-vision/finding-eye-doctor>]  (National Eye Institute)
- National Eye Institute [<https://www.nei.nih.gov/>] 

Children

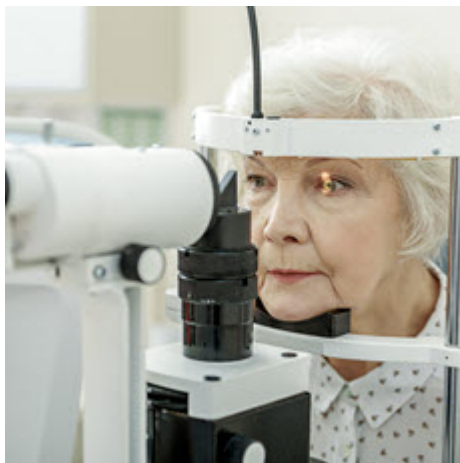
- Cataract [<https://www.aapos.org/glossary/cataract>] (American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus)
- Intraocular Lens Implant (IOL) [<https://www.aapos.org/glossary/intraocular-lens-implant-iol>]
(American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus)

Older Adults

- Aging and Health: Cataracts [<https://www.healthinaging.org/a-z-topic/cataracts>] (AGS Health in Aging Foundation)

Patient Handouts

- Cataract - adult [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001001.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/001001.htm>]
- Cataract removal [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002957.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/002957.htm>]
- Slit-lamp exam [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003880.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003880.htm>]
- Standard eye exam [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003434.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003434.htm>]



MEDICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA

Cataract [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/anatomyvideos/000024.htm>]

Cataract - adult [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001001.htm>]

Cataract removal [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002957.htm>]

Cataract surgery - series -- Normal anatomy [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/presentations/100079_1.htm]

Cataracts - what to ask your doctor [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000210.htm>]

Congenital cataract [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001615.htm>]

Slit-lamp exam [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003880.htm>]

Standard eye exam [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003434.htm>]

Related Health Topics

Eye Diseases [<https://medlineplus.gov/eyediseases.html>]

Vision Impairment and Blindness [<https://medlineplus.gov/visionimpairmentandblindness.html>]

National Institutes of Health

The primary NIH organization for research on *Cataract* is the National Eye Institute [<https://nei.nih.gov/>]

NIH MedlinePlus Magazine

Not Seeing Clearly? Cataracts Might Be the Problem [<https://magazine.medlineplus.gov/article/the-eyes-have-it>]

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