

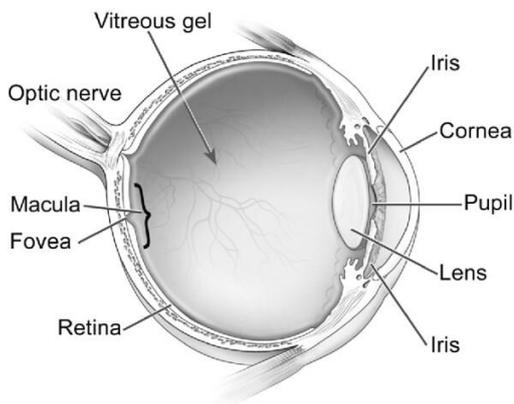


Quality surgery in the community

HOW TO CONTACT US

- n2scontact@nhs.net (08:00-17:00 Mon-Fri)
- 01603 228686 option 5 (09:00-12:00 Mon-Fri)
- 07458 131339 (voicemail-only service for late notice cancellation and Covid-19 symptom reporting outside the above times – **other queries will NOT be actioned**)

CATARACT INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS AND CARERS



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What is a cataract?

Just behind your pupil is the lens. This focuses the light entering the pupil so that it makes a clear image in the retina. The retina changes the image into a nerve impulse so that the brain can see it. Usually the lens of the eye is crystal clear so that light passes through it easily. If any cloudiness develops in the lens then it starts to block the light passing through. This clouding of the lens is called a cataract.

To remove the cataract, we replace the cloudy natural lens in the eye with a new plastic lens. This new lens is implanted into the space which was occupied by your natural lens.

What are the risks?

This method of cataract removal is extremely safe. The risk of serious complications developing as a result of cataract surgery is very low. Most common complications can be treated with medicines or further surgery.

Driving with a cataract can be more dangerous than having the operation!

Preparing for your assessment

We recommend attending the assessment with the person who will be bringing you for your operation. Please bring your current glasses prescription with you if possible, as well as any older ones if you have them available. You will be seen by a nurse who will collate some personal information, including a medical history and details of medication taken. It is helpful to bring this with you to the appointment. You will then have the opportunity to ask any questions you may have and any worries can be fully discussed.

During the assessment we will take some measurements of your eyes, called biometry. An ultrasound echo will measure the length of your eye and automatically calculate the power of the lens most likely to give you clear vision after the operation. None of these measurements are painful or dangerous, and your eye will feel normal afterwards.

Contact lenses can cause these measurements to be inaccurate!

-Soft contact lens wearers: please remove BOTH at least **2 weeks** prior to your assessment
-Hard (RGP) lens wearers: please remove BOTH at least **4 weeks** prior to your assessment

The operation

All our patients have their operation carried out under a local anaesthetic. Anaesthetic drops are put into the eye and absorbed, making the eye numb.

DO NOT READ IF YOU WOULD PREFER NOT TO KNOW ABOUT THE OPERATION

You'll be directed to sit on the chair, which will fold out into a bed (like a dentist's chair). The skin around your eye is cleaned with antiseptic, and a sterile plastic sheet is placed over you, leaving just the eye area to be operated on. Oxygen is pumped under the sheet, so you'll have no trouble breathing. A small incision is made at the edge of the cornea, just a few millimetres across. This incision acts as a valve so that nothing can exude from the eye during or after the operation. The cataract is broken down with an ultrasonic probe and removed from the eye. The lens implant is then inserted in a capsule, which unfolds once in the eye and anchors into place. The operation usually takes less than 30 minutes, often around 15 minutes. No stitches are used, due to the valve-like incision sealing securely following the surgery.

The next day

Usually patients see clearly immediately, but sometimes it can take a little time for the vision to clear. Most patients tell us that everything is very bright at first, and colours may appear whiter. You may see the edge of the lens, which can appear as a semi-circle and may continue for several weeks. You may also notice flickering and shimmering from the artificial lens – these issues are normal and will settle.

You will be seen eight days after surgery for your post-operative check.

DO NOT DRIVE UNTIL YOU ARE SIGNED OFF AT YOUR POST-OPERATIVE CHECK

We recommend you go to your own optician for a sight test four to six weeks following surgery. Some patients will require a distance prescription following surgery, although a mild one – the operation is to remove the cataract, not correct your vision (although we try!)

ALL patients will require a near vision prescription/reading glasses following surgery

Can cataracts come back after being removed?

Once a cataract has been removed it cannot recur. However the fine membrane on which the implant rests can become cloudy. When this happens, the cloudiness can be removed with a simple laser treatment called YAG laser capsulotomy.

IMPORTANT ADVICE TO REMEMBER AFTER SURGERY

- You should take things very easy for the first few days. You may bend and stoop for short periods, but it is probably better to avoid heavy lifting for about ten days
- The greatest danger is poking or rubbing the eye. This could cause the valve to open, making the wound leak. Because some people rub their eyes in their sleep you will be given a protective shield to wear at night for the first two weeks
- Avoid strenuous exercise and swimming, but you don't need to stay indoors. Take care if it is windy in case anything blows into your eye
- Wash your hair leaning backward rather than forwards
- Avoid eye make-up for 6 weeks
- Avoid driving until after your post-operative check
- You can resume your sex life a week or two after the operation
- Returning to work will depend upon your occupation



Quality surgery in the community
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CATARACT PRE-OPERATION INFORMATION PACK

Please complete the following form as thoroughly as possible. It will save a great deal of time if this information is completed in advance, however please leave any questions you're unsure of to discuss with the team.

Remember to bring a list of any medications you currently take and a urine sample (in a sample pot – you can obtain this from your GP surgery) with you, along with your current glasses, any older prescriptions, information with regards to contact lenses plus anything else you feel is relevant.

If there is anything we need to be aware of in advance, such as communication needs or disability/accessibility information, please contact us at your earliest convenience to discuss. Our clinic is on the first floor of St Stephens Gate Medical Practice, but there is an accessible lift.

HOW TO FIND US



Wessex Street is just off Chapelfield Road in Norwich City Centre.

There is free underground parking at the practice for patients, although this is limited. Patients may also park in the Chapelfield Shopping Centre car park across the road. Present your ticket to reception when you leave to have your parking validated.

PLEASE DO NOT USE A SAT-NAV as this will take you to the wrong end of Wessex Street!

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

PATIENTS – PLEASE RETAIN THIS PAGE FOR YOUR RECORDS

When can I drive?

DO NOT DRIVE until after your post-operative check to ensure you are at DVLA legal standards. This appointment is scheduled eight days following surgery.

When can I fly?

Usually three weeks post-surgery – ask the surgery team about specific flight lengths.

When can I go swimming?

Avoid swimming for three weeks to ensure the eye is fully healed.

When can I resume physical activity?

Avoid strenuous exercise for four weeks, including golf and bowls.

When can I wear makeup?

No makeup for six weeks post-surgery, especially mascara and eyeliner.

When can I wash my hair?

Wash your hair backwards for the first two weeks to avoid water going into the eye.

When can I have sexual intercourse?

You can resume your sex life two weeks following the surgery.

Do I have to wear my eye shield while sleeping?

The greatest danger to your eye following surgery is poking or rubbing, and a lot of people do this while sleeping, so please wear your eye shield at night for two weeks post-surgery.

Do I need someone at home with me in the first 24 hours?

It is best to have someone take you home following the procedure, ideally in a car and NOT by bus, train or walking. You may feel a little disoriented and out of focus, especially if you've only had one eye operated on so far. It is recommended to have someone stay with you while you feel like this, but not a necessity once you're safely home.

OTHER ADVICE TO REMEMBER

You may see a semi-circle in the corner of your eye following surgery. This is the edge of the lens, and will settle once your brain gets used to the new lens. Everything may appear very bright at first and colours may appear whiter or bluer – this is normal and will settle.

Eyes can be itchy/gritty after using your eye drops, which is normal. If this becomes really uncomfortable for you, we recommend purchasing some preservative-free artificial tears and using these 15 minutes after your prescribed drops. You can purchase these from opticians, pharmacies or online.

It is important to clean and bathe your eyes with cooled boiled water and a cotton wool pad. This should be done at least once a day in the morning, and more often if required.

THIS IS AN OPERATION TO REMOVE YOUR CATARACT – NOT THE NEED FOR GLASSES

We cannot promise you won't need a distance vision prescription after surgery, although we try our best. You will DEFINITELY need a near vision prescription/reading glasses afterwards.

PRE-REGISTRATION FORM

Please complete form in BLOCK CAPITALS

Title:		Surname:		Forename(s):	
Address:					
Postcode:		Date of birth:		Age:	
Landline:		Mobile:			
Occupation:					
Nationality:		Religion:			
GP name:		GP practice:			
Address:					
Postcode:		Telephone:			
NEXT OF KIN					
Name:		Relationship:			
Address:					
Landline:		Mobile:			

PLEASE ANSWER THE BELOW QUESTIONS AS WELL AS YOU CAN

1. What do you think may be troubling your eye?

.....

2. How does this affect your daily activities?

.....

3. Have you had any eye problems/procedures in the past (including LASIK/LASEK surgery)?

If yes, please let us know at your earliest convenience and bring any paperwork associated with the procedure

.....

4. Is there a history of eye problems in your family?

.....

5. Please tell us what you would like to achieve from your visit:

.....

YOUR GENERAL HEALTH

In order to assist the nurses and surgeon, please circle the correct answer to the following questions and provide details in the space provided. Please be honest and thorough.

Have you ever had any serious illnesses?		YES/NO		ALLERGIES – please state ALL allergies/reactions	
Year:		Illness:			
Year:		Illness:			
Year:		Illness:			
Have you had any operations?			YES/NO		
Year:		Operation:		Have you ever had a general anaesthetic?	
Year:		Operation:		YES/NO	
Year:		Operation:		Did you have any problems?	
Do you smoke?			YES/NO		
If YES, how many?			a day		
If NO, have you ever smoked?			YES/NO		
When did you give up?					
How much alcohol do you drink a week?			units		
<i>(1 unit = 1 single spirit, ½ pint beer/lager, 1 glass wine)</i>					
Details:					
Are you taking any tablets, medicines or injections? <i>(including oral contraceptives and hormone replacements)</i>					
Now:					
In the last 3 months:					
<i>(If there is not enough space here, please bring a separate list)</i>					

Do you have any of the following? Please circle all that apply

High blood pressure	YES/NO	Anaemia or other blood problems	YES/NO
Hear problems, rheumatic fever or chest pain	YES/NO	Hepatitis or liver disease	YES/NO
Bronchitis, asthma, wheezing or other chest problems?	YES/NO	Excessive bleeding or bruising	YES/NO
Convulsions, fits, strokes	YES/NO	Indigestion or stomach ulcers	YES/NO
Prolonged mental upset	YES/NO	Risk of HIV (AIDs)	YES/NO
Arthritis or muscle disease	YES/NO	Hearing problems	YES/NO
Is there a history of inherited illness in your immediate family?			YES/NO
If so, what?			
Any issues with memory? <i>(Alzheimer's, Dementia etc)</i>			
Anything not covered above? <i>(other illnesses/ops, disabilities, communication needs etc)</i>			

Patients signature: Date:

Checked by: Date: