

Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals **NHS**  
NHS Trust

# Choice of lens and glasses after your cataract surgery

Information for patients





# Choosing the lens and glasses

During cataract surgery the lens that has become cloudy is replaced with an artificial lens. By choosing a particular strength of lens suited to you, there is the opportunity to change your need for glasses after the operation.

At your pre-operative assessment appointment, we will discuss the various options with you. We will check your eyes and the surgeon will choose the best lens for you – taking your wishes into account. The choice will depend on what glasses you usually use, the vision and any cataract in your other eye, and your needs in terms of work, daily activities etc.

The final choice of lens can be usually be altered at any point up to your operation, including on the day itself. However, some types of lens need to be ordered in advance and in this case the choice needs to be made at the pre-operative assessment stage. If this applies to you we will let you know.

# Factors affecting the choice of lens

Most artificial lenses have a fixed focusing power and can give you either clear distance vision or clear near vision. Glasses are then used to correct your near or distance vision – depending on the lens chosen.

Some change to your current glasses prescription is usually needed after the surgery, whatever lens is chosen. If you have never needed to use prescription glasses in the past, you will need to start using them after your cataract operation.

- **Presbyopia**

Presbyopia is a reduced ability to focus near vision, which often develops from the age of 40 onwards. Most people with presbyopia choose a lens that gives them clear distance vision and use glasses for near vision (reading, computer screens etc).

- **Short-sight (myopia)**

Those who are used to being short-sighted (myopic) sometimes prefer to stay this way so that they can continue being able to read without glasses. They will still need to rely on glasses for far distance (driving, seeing signposts, recognising faces across street etc).

- **Complicated prescriptions**

If you currently need glasses to correct significant astigmatism (uneven shape of the cornea / front of the eye) or double vision, you may still need them for all distances after your surgery.

- **Anisometropia (vision imbalance)**

If we are taking the opportunity to dramatically improve your short-sight or long-sight, you may temporarily have a degree of imbalance between your eyes. This will be resolved by having surgery to your other eye. (Please ask for our separate advice leaflet on this.)

## When will I get my new glasses?

We usually recommend waiting until your eye has settled, at around 6 weeks after surgery, before getting an eye test for your new glasses from your optician.

We will discuss with you at your post-operative check-up whether you should wait longer than 6 weeks (e.g. until the stitches are removed or after surgery to your other eye). Usually one lens in your glasses can be updated for the affected eye, depending on your current frames. Driving may not be advisable until your glasses are updated - please discuss this with us at one of your visits.

# What are the risks?

We will discuss with you the aims of your operation and the choice of lens, what to expect afterwards, and the risks involved. There is a slight risk of a small margin of error in the eye measurements or the choice of lens. The vast majority of patients are pleased with the outcome of their cataract operation.

# Further information and how to contact us

The information in this leaflet will be discussed with you during your pre-operative assessment appointment. If you have any questions, or if there is anything you are unsure about, please ask a nurse or doctor before your operation. Your optician, with their understanding of your previous prescriptions, may also be able to discuss your needs and preferences with you. Alternatively, you may contact:

At the Oxford Eye Hospital:

## **Pre-operative Assessment Nurses**

Tel: Oxford (01865) 231117 or 231095

OR

At the Horton Hospital:

## **Eye Outpatients**

Tel: Banbury (01295) 229606

If you require this document in another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01865 221473** stating your requirements. When we receive your call we may transfer you to an interpreter. This can take some time, so please be patient.

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