Ten questions before cataract surgery

A. Is surgery right for me?

Take this checklist with you to your eye doctor or eye surgeon. Check the boxes that matter most and write the answers below each question.

☐ **1. Are cataracts the main cause of my vision difficulties?**

Ask whether other retinal or corneal conditions could affect the outcome.

☐ **2. Is it better to have surgery now, or can I wait?**

Describe what you find difficult: reading, driving at night, working or recognizing faces.

☐ **3. What improvement can I realistically expect in my particular case?**

Ask what may improve and which limitations might remain.

What I most want to see clearly

Other answers I want to remember

An educational checklist to help you prepare for your appointment.

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B. The lens and my vision afterward

☐ **4. Which intraocular lens do you recommend, and why?**

Ask about the options that suit your eyes and daily activities, not just brand names, and how any astigmatism will be corrected.

☐ **5. Which activities will I still need glasses for?**

Discuss distance, intermediate (computer or tablet) and near (reading) vision.

☐ **6. What visual side effects might I notice with this lens?**

Ask about halos, glare, contrast and night driving, and the options if the outcome is not what you expected.

A quick guide: monofocal lenses prioritize one focus; extended-range lenses broaden the range of vision; multifocal lenses provide several focal points. Toric lenses correct astigmatism and can be combined with different designs. Every option has benefits and limitations.

Learn more

I Have Cataracts: What Should I Know?

Understand your diagnosis, your options and what to ask. Available as an ebook, paperback and audiobook. A Spanish edition is also available.

https://artalbooks.com/cataracts

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C. Surgery and recovery

☐ **7. Which medical history and medications should the team know about?**

Mention LASIK or other surgery, medical conditions, allergies and all medications, including blood thinners and prostate medications. Do not stop them on your own.

☐ **8. What will surgery involve, and how should I prepare?**

Ask about anesthesia and the team's experience. Request instructions about eye drops, medications and transportation, including someone to drive you home.

☐ **9. What is the recovery plan, including surgery on my second eye?**

Ask about follow-up visits and returning to work, exercise and driving. If both eyes need surgery, ask about the interval and your vision between procedures.

☐ **10. Which symptoms need urgent attention, and whom should I call?**

Get an after-hours contact number. After surgery, seek immediate help from your eye care team or emergency care for vision loss, severe pain, or new flashes or shadows.

Educational information, not a substitute for your ophthalmologist's assessment or instructions. Not every lens or option suits every eye.

Further reading:

Cataracts · MedlinePlus: https://medlineplus.gov/cataract.html

Intraocular lenses · AAO: https://www.aao.org/eye-health/diseases/cataracts-iol-implants

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