

CATARACT – OBSERVATION

You have a cataract in one or both of your eyes. This is nothing to worry about and is a normal ageing process. It just means that the lens inside your eye, which focuses the light onto the retina at the back of the eye and allows you to see, is slightly cloudy.

It may or may not affect your vision yet. If it is not affecting your vision and you are currently happy with the state of your eyesight then, after discussion with your optometrist, you may elect to leave it alone.

The spectacles provided should improve your vision and as long as you are happy with that vision we need do nothing else.

If the spectacles do not sharpen up your vision enough and your optometrist feels that the cataract is responsible you may eventually be referred for cataract surgery if you wish.

If you are not referred at the moment it is because the cataract is mild and not causing a great deal of difficulty or there are other problems with the eyes (usually “wear and tear” at the back of the eye) which mean that cataract surgery at this stage may not benefit you.

Will it get worse? Sadly, yes. It is an ageing process and unless you are getting any younger it will gradually worsen. This is however usually a very slow process.

How long will it take until I need it operating on? Each case is unique. It could be a year it could be ten years. It is impossible to tell.

How will I know if it needs operating on? Usually your vision will get gradually more blurry and your optometrist may not be able to correct it fully with spectacles. You may experience haloes around lights or a lot of glare in bright conditions. Your optometrist will be able to re-assess you at any stage should you require it however it is prudent to see them at least on a yearly basis.

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These patient information sheets are written for general guidance and are not intended to replace a formal consultation. Each case should be judged on individual merits.

www.eyeinfo.org.uk / www.cataractsurgery.org.uk