



Cataract

Your guide to surgery

my**eye**specialist.
your personal eye specialist

What is a cataract?

A cataract is a cloudiness of the natural lens in your eye. As the lens becomes cloudy, your vision will become blurred, hazy, and less colourful. Cataracts occur as we get older. Sometimes cataracts are present at birth, or they can be caused by trauma or other eye diseases.



The surgery

Cataract surgery is one of the safest and most commonly performed operations in the world. During the procedure your cloudy lens will be removed and replaced with an acrylic lens.

This surgery is performed by a specialist eye surgeon who has trained for many years in Ophthalmology. All cataract surgery for myeyespecialist patients is performed at Gold Coast Eye Hospital, a fully licensed and accredited day hospital adjacent to the myeyespecialist clinic in Robina Town Centre.



Assessment for cataract surgery

Please allow 1.5 hours for your visit

Our extensive eye testing and assessment helps make sure the right strength and type of lens is chosen to suit your needs.

When you come in to see us, our trained technical staff will complete a series of eye tests to determine the health of your eyes and to help calculate the best possible intraocular lens for your lifestyle.

You are involved in this decision making process with your Eye Surgeon.

Testing includes: eye dominance, stereoscopic vision, ocular muscle balance, biometry measuring the length

of the eye and curvature of the cornea, corneal topography, and aberrometry. An ocular coherence tomograph (OCT) will be used to photograph the optic nerve and macula to ensure your eye is otherwise healthy.

Our clinic uses Heidelberg Engineering equipment which is recognised as a world leader in ophthalmic imaging and biometry.

Clinic fees

The myeyespecialist outpatient clinic fees are partly subsidised by Medicare. Please note, private health insurance does not cover your clinic fee. If you have exceeded your safety net, you will receive a larger rebate from Medicare.

Glasses after surgery?

An acrylic intraocular lens (IOL) replaces your natural lens and is customised to your needs to reduce, and sometimes eliminate your need for glasses. Most IOLs are single vision and can correct short sightedness (myopia), long-sightedness (hypermetropia), and astigmatism.

Premium IOLs are now available and these use advanced optics to give you a better range of vision. Although premium lenses provide a greater

range of vision without glasses, there will be some visual compromise including possible haloes, less contrast, and slightly reduced vision in dim lighting. Not all patients are suitable for premium IOLs.

You will be part of the decision making process when selecting your ideal IOL. This decision will be based on your eye health, your comprehensive eye test measurements and your lifestyle.



Intraocular lens options

1. Standard single focus lenses

- These lenses give you crisp and clear vision at distance.
- You will need glasses for reading and computers.

2. Toric lenses

- These lenses will correct astigmatism.
- They are ordered on an individual basis and must be aligned during your surgery.
- Occasionally, further surgery may be required if the alignment changes.

3. Multifocal lenses

Trifocal Lenses

- These lenses will give you vision at all distances including reading without glasses.
- The compromise is that you may see rings at night around oncoming headlights - This improves with time.
- Your vision in dim light may be slightly compromised but this is not usually noticeable.

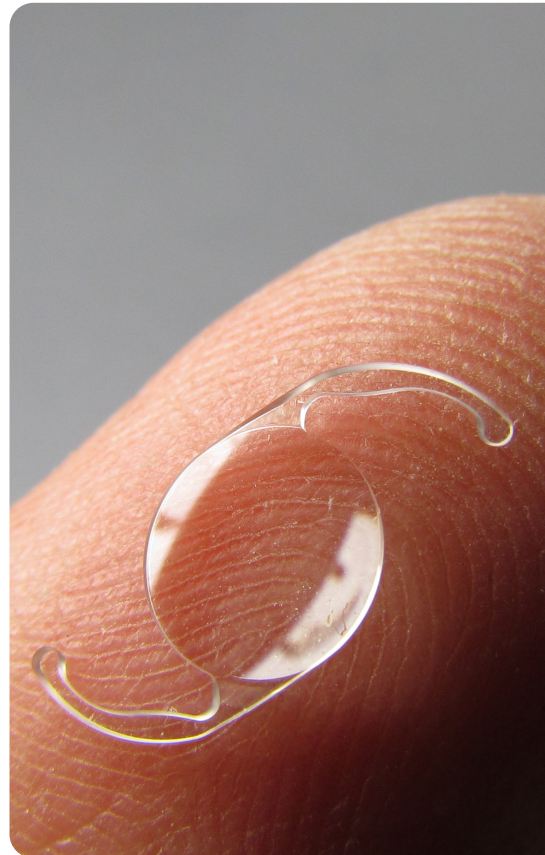
Bifocal Lenses

- These lenses are less likely to produce issues at night time.
- They give you a good range of distance and close vision, but not quite the range that Trifocals give you.
- You may still require glasses for fine print.
- These lenses take longer to get used to than trifocals.

4. Mix and Match

- Sometimes a combination of lenses are used to suit your needs.

Your Eye Surgeon will advise you on the best choice of lens to suit your eyes and your lifestyle.



Neuroadaptation

Neuroadaptation is the period of time following cataract surgery where the patient's brain is adjusting to the new type of focus. This can range anywhere from a few days to a few months and is dependent on your personality type and the chosen lenses. Multifocals and monovision tend to have a longer neuroadaptation period. **Keeping both eyes open after surgery, without comparing each eye separately, is the fastest way to neuroadapt.**

What if I do not like my vision after cataract surgery?

Cataract surgery is complex so it is advisable to be certain about your lens decision prior to undergoing surgery.

If you do not like your vision after surgery, there are options:

- The focus of your vision can be fine tuned with glasses.
- It is also possible to change the intraocular lens.
- Your vision can be enhanced with laser or an additional lens may be inserted over the existing lens.

Not everyone is suitable for these procedures.

The cost of additional procedures is not necessarily covered by your nominated health fund.



Choice of Lens

Your eye surgeon will help you choose the best intraocular lens for your lifestyle. The choice of lens does not have to be decided on the day of the clinic visit. Sometimes, further testing may be required. Prior to ordering your lens, your surgeon has a preoperative cataract meeting with our clinical team to finalise your lens choice in view of your clinical examination, eye measurements and lifestyle.

Cataract surgery fees

Cataract surgery is partially covered by Medicare and almost fully covered by most private health funds. This is dependent on the level of private insurance you have. You will need to check with your health insurer prior to surgery to see if you are fully covered. The cataract procedure item number is **42702**.

You may be required to pay an excess as part of your health insurance, depending on your policy. Most policies have an excess that is paid each year on the first admission to hospital. This will be collected by Gold Coast Eye Hospital on behalf of your health fund.

You may also be required to pay a gap amount as part of the surgical fee. You will be issued an Informed Financial Consent as part of the booking process so you have full visibility of your fees.

If you do not have health insurance, or your insurance does not cover you for cataracts:

1. You can increase your policy or take out a new policy. You will need to serve the waiting period specified by your health insurance.
2. You can pay the cost of the surgery and intraocular lens yourself.
3. You can be referred to the public waiting list at Gold Coast University Hospital.



Risks of surgery

Your eye surgeons have many years of experience performing cataract surgery with tens of thousands of successful operations. Most cataract surgery is straight forward and safe, however, no surgery is free of risk. While your eye surgeon makes every attempt to minimise risks, any complications may have permanent effects. Fortunately, most complications can be resolved with good results, however your recovery may take longer if this were to occur.

The following risks are listed to inform you and not to alarm you. There may be others that are not listed.

- High pressure in the eye
- Bleeding in the eye
- Swelling and clouding of the cornea
- Excessive inflammation of the eye
- Inflammation of the eye associated with macular swelling and decreased vision
- Weakness or break in the capsule that holds the acrylic lens. A different type of lens may need to be used.
- Drooping of the eyelid, which is usually temporary
- Retained piece of cataract
- Damage to, or dislocation of, the IOL
- Opacification of the IOL
- Detachment of the retina
- Infection of the eye
- Rarely, blindness and loss of the operated eye
- Rarely, inflammation of the unoperated eye, which is called sympathetic ophthalmia and can be associated with total or partial loss of vision in the unoperated eye

Although most complications resolve with treatment, there is a small risk that they can affect vision, sometimes permanently.



Report to your eye surgeon

Inform your eye surgeon immediately if you have any of the following:

- Increasing pain or redness of the eye
- Pain that is not relieved by non-prescription medications such as paracetamol
- Worsening vision
- Onset of flashes of light and flowing black spots or opacities in your vision
- Nausea or vomiting
- Other concerns regarding surgery



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The day before surgery

Remember to

- Organise a carer to take you home from Gold Coast Eye Hospital and stay with you for 24hrs. Your procedure may be deferred if you don't have a carer.
- Have loose-fitting clothes to wear on the day.
- Leave valuables at home.
- Contact Gold Coast Eye Hospital prior to your day of surgery if you feel unwell, have a cough, facial sores, or sticky eyes as your procedure may need to be delayed.



Fasting

- **Do NOT eat or drink for 6 hours prior to your admission time.**

Medications

- Take your usual medications with a sip of water unless you have been told otherwise.
- Do NOT stop your blood-thinning medications.
- If diabetic, you will be given instructions by Gold Coast Eye Hospital the day before surgery.



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The day of surgery

On the day

- Shower and wash your face on the morning of surgery.
- Do not wear moisturiser, makeup or hairspray.
- Put on loose clothes.
- Take your usual medications with a sip of water. Use prescribed eye drops.
- Make sure your carer is available to pick you up and stay with you. For 24 hours after the procedure.
- Bring any medication you may require on the day.
- Have your private health fund details and cash, bank cheque, or credit card to pay for the procedure.

On arrival:

- Our receptionists will check your admission details, name and date of birth prior to you seeing the admission nurse.
- A nurse will take you into Gold Coast Eye Hospital to prepare you for theatre which will include dilating your eye with special drops.
- We will check your details with you several times during your stay – this is how we keep you safe and ensure that you have an optimal surgical outcome.



The Anaesthetist:

The Anaesthetist will see you prior to the procedure. You will be sedated, and your eye made numb with local anaesthetic.

The Procedure:

You will be sleepy and relaxed. Your surgeon will put a sterile cover over your eye and will ask you to look at the light above. It is important during the surgery to stay still and follow the directions of your surgeon. You will not feel any pain.

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After your surgery

Recovery

- Following the procedure, you will stay in recovery with us so we can make sure you feel well before being discharged home. You will be given some refreshments prior to being picked up by your carer.

When you get Home after Surgery:

- Remove your eye shield when you get home from the hospital and put it on a clean tissue. Wear the eye shield to bed every night for the first week – this helps you avoid rubbing the eye when you are asleep.
- **Start your hourly drops into the operated eye as soon as you get home from hospital.**
- Have a quiet evening

First week after Surgery

- **Continue your eyedrops and tick each eyedrop off in the post operative eyedrop schedule and follow your post operative instruction sheet.**
- **It is important to attend your postoperative appointment – this is located on your post operative instruction sheet.**
- Be careful walking down steps.
- NO swimming, gardening or contact sports.
- Do NOT lift heavy weights.
- Stop any glaucoma drops in the operated eye until you see your eye surgeon.
- Shower as normal but close your eyes when rinsing your face or hair under the shower.
- Do not wear makeup or eye cream for two weeks.
- Avoid rubbing or touching your eye.

Second week after surgery

- Avoid swimming and gardening.
- Moderate weights and aerobic exercise is okay
- Avoid rubbing or touching your eye.

You can resume normal activities after week 3



What to expect after your surgery

- Your eye should become less red, less scratchy, and feel comfortable. Wear sunglasses outside because your eye will be light sensitive.
- Your vision may be blurry to start with but should improve each day. It may take a number of weeks and new glasses at 6 weeks to reach your full visual potential.
- If your eye becomes painful and is not relieved with panadeine, or if you have nausea or vomiting or sudden change in vision, you must contact us immediately.
- YAG laser polishing of the capsule that supports the new IOL will be required months to years after your surgery.

The capsule will become cloudy with time and blur your vision. YAG polishing is done in the clinic and is painless.

Your surgeon will check if this is required 6 to 12 months after your surgery.

If you have any concerns

During business hours, please call 07 5592 7900. After 5pm on the evening of your surgery, please call 0414 777 374.

If you are unable to contact myeyespecialist, please attend the emergency department at Gold Coast University Hospital where there is an eye doctor available 24/7.

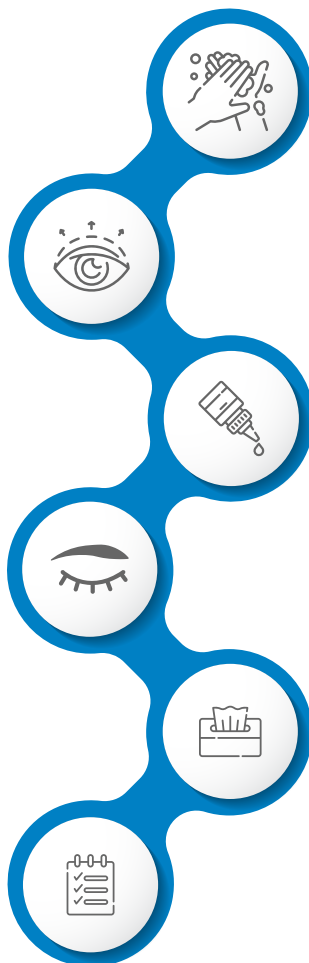
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Medication after surgery

Administering your eyedrops

Using your index finger, pull down your lower eyelid to form a pocket



Wash your hands

Gently squeeze one drop into the pocket. Do not let the bottle tip touch your eye.

Close your eyes for 30 seconds

Carefully blot away any excess liquid that may be on your cheeks with a clean tissue.

Tick off the drop administered in the eyedrop schedule

Scan the QR code for an instructional video on how to apply eyedrops.



Please use Maxidex every hour on the day of your surgery until bedtime. This will help soothe your eye.

Eyedrop schedule

Week 1	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
Chlorsig	<input type="checkbox"/> Breakfast <input type="checkbox"/> Lunch <input type="checkbox"/> Dinner <input type="checkbox"/> Bedtime	<input type="checkbox"/> Breakfast <input type="checkbox"/> Lunch <input type="checkbox"/> Dinner <input type="checkbox"/> Bedtime	<input type="checkbox"/> Breakfast <input type="checkbox"/> Lunch <input type="checkbox"/> Dinner <input type="checkbox"/> Bedtime	<input type="checkbox"/> Breakfast <input type="checkbox"/> Lunch <input type="checkbox"/> Dinner <input type="checkbox"/> Bedtime	<input type="checkbox"/> Breakfast <input type="checkbox"/> Lunch <input type="checkbox"/> Dinner <input type="checkbox"/> Bedtime	<input type="checkbox"/> Breakfast <input type="checkbox"/> Lunch <input type="checkbox"/> Dinner <input type="checkbox"/> Bedtime	<input type="checkbox"/> Breakfast <input type="checkbox"/> Lunch <input type="checkbox"/> Dinner <input type="checkbox"/> Bedtime
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Week 2	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
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Week 3	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
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Week 4	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
Maxidex	<input type="checkbox"/> Breakfast <input type="checkbox"/> Lunch <input type="checkbox"/> Dinner <input type="checkbox"/> Bedtime	<input type="checkbox"/> Breakfast <input type="checkbox"/> Lunch <input type="checkbox"/> Dinner <input type="checkbox"/> Bedtime	<input type="checkbox"/> Breakfast <input type="checkbox"/> Lunch <input type="checkbox"/> Dinner <input type="checkbox"/> Bedtime	<input type="checkbox"/> Breakfast <input type="checkbox"/> Lunch <input type="checkbox"/> Dinner <input type="checkbox"/> Bedtime	<input type="checkbox"/> Breakfast <input type="checkbox"/> Lunch <input type="checkbox"/> Dinner <input type="checkbox"/> Bedtime	<input type="checkbox"/> Breakfast <input type="checkbox"/> Lunch <input type="checkbox"/> Dinner <input type="checkbox"/> Bedtime	<input type="checkbox"/> Breakfast <input type="checkbox"/> Lunch <input type="checkbox"/> Dinner <input type="checkbox"/> Bedtime
Week 5	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
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Week 6	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
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- Chlorsig Eyedrops:** 4 times a day for one week then stop.
- Maxidex Eyedrops:** 4 times a day for four weeks then 2 times a day for two weeks then stop.

myeyespecialist.
your personal eye specialist

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