

Treating a cataract with surgery



You are about to have surgery on your eye to treat a cataract. This fact sheet is intended to help you better understand this treatment and answer your questions.

What is a cataract?

Normally, the lens of the eye is transparent. With age, some of the components of the lens can become stuck together. This prevents light from passing through properly, and vision becomes worse. This is called a cataract.

How is a cataract treated?

The only treatment possible is surgery to replace the lens with an artificial lens. This improves not only your vision, but also your quality of life.

When and where will my surgery be done?

This information will be given to you about 10 days before the surgery.

How long will it take?

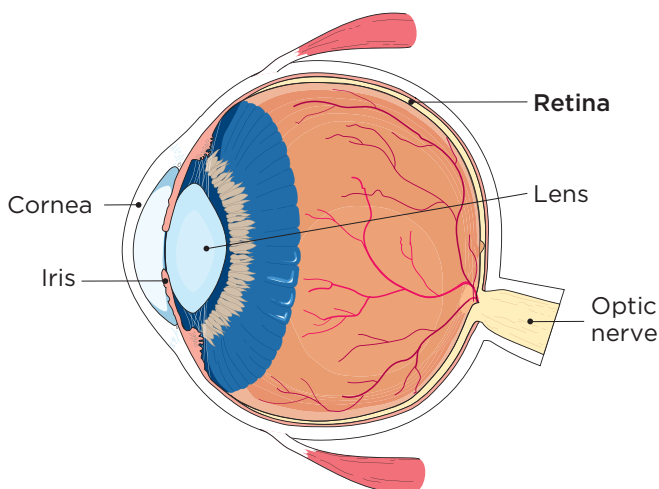
Plan on a full day. The surgery itself is not long (20 to 30 minutes). However, you may have to wait.

Important

Depending on the lens you choose, you may have to pay for it. If so, arrive at your appointment at least 15 minutes early. You will need to go to the Accounts Receivable Desk (Pavilion D, 1st floor, door D.01.5011). Payment methods accepted are: cash, credit card, or certified cheque payable to the Centre hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal.

Debit cards are not accepted.

Interior of the eye





Are there any contraindications?

There are none.

Can there be complications?

This surgery usually goes smoothly. As with any surgery, there is a risk of bleeding and infection. But this is rare and can be controlled. There is a risk of vision loss (partial or total) in fewer than 1 in 1,000 cases.

What should I do BEFORE the surgery?

In the weeks before the surgery

> Come to your preparatory exams

There are several types of lenses. You will discuss the various lens options with your doctor.

> Plan to bring someone with you

After the surgery, you'll have difficulty getting around alone and won't be able to drive. This is why you should be accompanied:

- **on the day of the surgery**
- **and on the day after the surgery** for your follow-up visit with the doctor

If you don't speak French or English, your companion must be able to translate for you.

Space in the waiting room is limited: if possible, bring only one person with you.

> Plan to have help at home

Make sure everything is organized for your return home. You'll need help for the first 24 hours (for example, to cook meals).

The morning of the surgery

- Take a shower or bath.
- Wear loose clothing that is easy to put on.
- Don't use any face cream, make-up, nail polish, or perfume.
- **If you're on any medications**, take them as usual. If you have eye drops for glaucoma, you can apply them.



Someone should accompany you to the hospital.

What should I bring to the hospital on the day of the surgery?

- > All medications you take, in their original containers, or a list provided by your pharmacist.
- > Your eye drops, if you have any.
- > If you need to pay for the lens: cash, credit care, or certified cheque.
- > Please leave jewelry and items of value at home.

What does the surgery involve?

Your eye will be frozen (anesthetized) with drops (no needles). So you'll stay awake and won't feel any pain.

A very small incision will be made in the cornea of the eye. This allows the lens to be removed and replaced by the artificial lens.

Your eye will heal quickly. You will have little or no discomfort.



Are there any precautions to take AFTER the surgery?

Yes, here they are. It's very important to follow these to prevent complications.

If you have questions, don't hesitate to ask your care team!

Eye shield

- Remove the shield when you arrive home or keep it on until your appointment with the doctor (the next day), depending on the instructions you receive.
- During the week after the surgery, wear the shield over the operated eye at night and when napping.

Eye drops

- Start using the drops that were prescribed for you at (time)

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Always wait 5 minutes between applying the different types of drops.



Pain

- If you feel any pain, take Tylenol.

Sensitivity to light

- Your eyes will be more sensitive to light. Wear sunglasses to go outside. If needed, you can wear them inside as well.

Activities

- When you get home, you can do quiet activities, such as reading, watching TV, or using a computer.
- After the first 24 hours, you can go for walks with no problem. Walking and cycling (moderate) are the best physical activities during the first 2 weeks.



IMPORTANT

Don't drive until you have permission from your doctor. If you plan to fly, ask your doctor for advice.

Activities to avoid during the first 2 weeks after the surgery

- Don't put water and soap in your eyes. Showering, washing, and dyeing your hair are permitted, with care. Swimming is prohibited.
- Don't apply make-up to the operated eye.
- Don't lift heavy objects.
- Don't engage in sports or intense training.

What symptoms should I watch for at home?

It's normal if:

- > The operated eye stings (itches), especially on the first day. Don't worry, it will pass. Don't rub your eye, even if you want to. Also, don't close your eyelids tightly.
- > Your vision is blurry for a few days. It will slowly return to normal.



What to watch for

If you have any of the following symptoms, **call the Ophthalmology Clinic immediately**:

- sudden loss of vision in the operated eye: you see less well than you did right after your surgery
- pain not relieved by medication (Tylenol)
- the operated eye is constantly watery
- increasing redness in the operated eye; it is, however, normal to have a little redness after the surgery

Ophthalmology Clinic

Monday to Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

> **514 890-8278**

Evenings or weekends (say that you were operated on and need to speak to an ophthalmologist):

> **514 890-8444**



What should I do if I need to cancel or postpone my appointment?

Call the Admission Service right away:

> **514 890-8000, extension 27261**

Outside of business hours, leave a message.

If you're ill or have a fever in the days before the surgery, call the Admission Service. Your appointment may be postponed. This service can also answer your questions BEFORE the surgery.

How will I be followed up?

You will have an appointment with the doctor the day after the surgery. You will be told the time. After that, follow-up is provided on a case-by-case basis.

Date of follow-up:

Time:

Doctor:

Location : CHUM

1051, rue Sanguinet, Montréal
H2X 0C1

Ophthalmology Clinic

1st Floor - Pavillon D - D.01.2000



USEFUL RESOURCES

Other health sheets published by the CHUM are available. Ask for those that might fit your situation.



You can also find them on our web site
chumontreal.qc.ca/fiches-sante

The content of this document in no way replaces the recommendations and diagnoses made, or the treatment suggested by your health professional.

To find out more about the Centre hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal
chumontreal.qc.ca