

THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO CATARACT TREATMENT AND SURGERY



CLARITY STARTS HERE

Your vision is central to your experience of the world. At West Texas Eye Associates, we understand how cataracts can impact your daily life – from driving at night to reading your favorite book. This guide is designed to help you know cataracts, treatment options, and what to expect from surgery so you can make the best decisions for your eye health



What Are Cataracts?

Cataracts occur when the natural lens inside your eye becomes cloudy, making it harder to see clearly. This is a common condition, especially as we age. More than half of Americans will develop cataracts by the time they are 80.

Common Symptoms of Cataracts:

- Cloudy, blurry, or dim vision
- Difficulty seeing at night
- Glare or halos around lights
- Colors appearing faded
- Frequent prescription changes for glasses

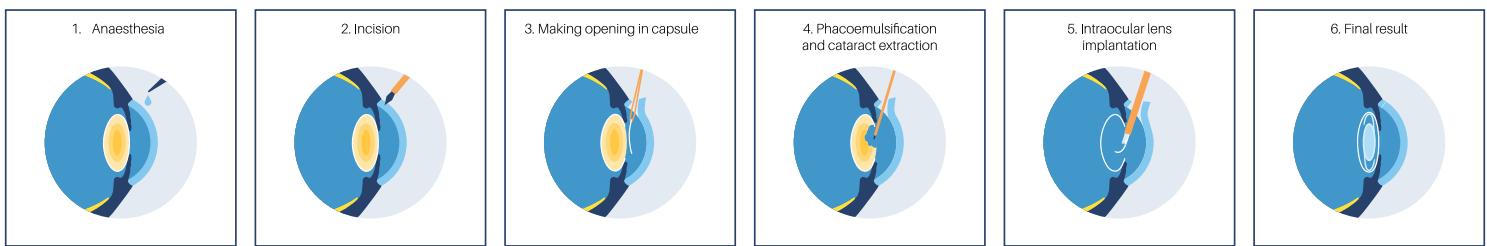
When to Consider Cataract Surgery

Not all cataracts require immediate surgery. But when cloudy vision begins to interfere with your daily life – such as driving, working, or enjoying hobbies – it may be time to consider cataract surgery.

Your surgeon will guide you through a comprehensive eye exam to determine whether cataract surgery is right for you.



CATARACT SURGERY: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



Cataract surgery is one of the most common — and safest — procedures performed worldwide. The cloudy lens is removed and replaced with a clear, artificial intraocular lens (IOL).

Quick Facts:

- Outpatient procedure (no overnight hospital stay)
- Typically completed in less than 30 minutes
- Uses advanced laser or ultrasound technology
- Recovery is generally quick, with many patients noticing improved vision within days

Types of Intraocular Lenses (IOLs)

Choosing the right lens is an integral part of your cataract surgery journey. We offer advanced IOL options tailored to your lifestyle.

Intraocular lenses (IOLs) have undergone significant advancements in recent decades, offering increasingly improved options. Learning about the choices and understanding the impact of cataract surgery can make a meaningful difference in your life.

- **Standard Monofocal Lenses:** Monofocal Lenses provide a single range of vision, set for either distance or near. Known as “standard” or “basic” lenses, they do not correct astigmatism and are typically covered by insurance; glasses are often needed for optimal vision after surgery.
- **Multifocal Lenses:** Provide vision at near, intermediate, and far distances, reducing reliance on glasses.
- **Extended Depth Toric Lenses:** Designed for patients with astigmatism.

Your surgeon will help you select the lens that best fits your goals and daily needs.



HOW TO PREPARE FOR CATARACT SURGERY

Proper preparation can reduce anxiety and set you up for the best results. Here are the key steps:

1. Complete Your Pre-Surgery Exam

Your eye doctor will perform a detailed exam to measure your eye and discuss which type of IOL is best for you. This is the time to ask questions about vision goals (distance, near, or multifocal options). Bring a list of your medications and any medical conditions.

2. Follow Medication Instructions

Blood thinners: Your doctor may ask you to pause or adjust medications that increase bleeding risk.

- Eye drops: You may be prescribed antibiotic or anti-inflammatory drops to start before surgery.
- Other prescriptions: Always follow your surgeon's guidance—never stop medication without approval.

3. Arrange Transportation

Because you'll receive mild sedation, you won't be able to drive yourself home. Arrange for a friend or family member to take you to and from the surgery center.

4. Plan for Comfort

Avoid eating or drinking for a set number of hours before surgery (your care team will give specific instructions).

- Wear comfortable clothing.
- Leave makeup, lotions, perfumes, and jewelry at home.

5. Prepare Your Home for Recovery

Set up a safe, relaxing space for when you return home. Stock up on groceries, plan easy meals, and keep tissues, artificial tears, or sunglasses handy. Avoid heavy lifting and bending for the first week.

6. Know the Do's and Don'ts

Do: Use your prescribed eye drops exactly as instructed.

- Do: Protect your eye with the shield or glasses provided.
- Don't: Rub your eye or expose it to water (like swimming pools or hot tubs) until your doctor clears you.
- Don't: Engage in strenuous activity or heavy lifting during early recovery.



RECOVERY AFTER CATARACT SURGERY

Most patients notice clearer vision within a few days, though full healing may take several weeks.

Typical Recovery Steps:

- Use prescribed eye drops to aid healing
- Avoid heavy lifting or strenuous activity for a short period
- Protect your eyes from dust, wind, and direct pressure
- Follow up with your surgeon for post-op checkups

Risks and Safety

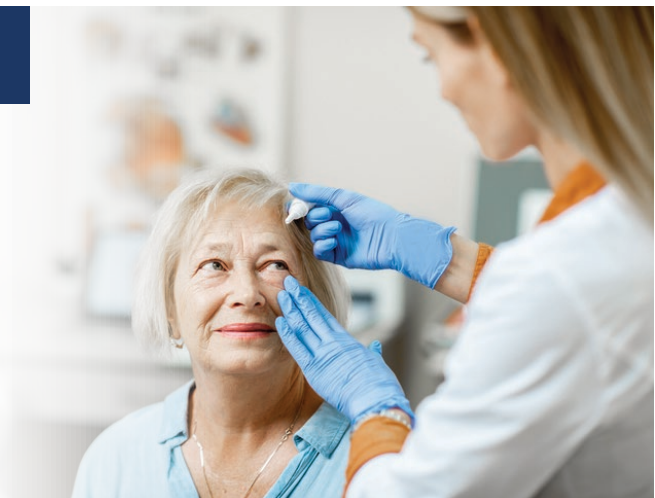
Cataract surgery is highly successful, but like any procedure, it carries some risks. These include infection, inflammation, or issues with the lens implant. Fortunately, serious complications are rare, and our surgical team is well-equipped to manage them effectively.

Why Choose West Texas Eye Associates for Your Cataract Surgery?

- Experienced cataract surgeons trusted by the community
- Access to advanced technology and lens options
- Personalized care plans designed around your vision goals
- Convenient locations across West Texas

Your Cataract Surgery Care Team

At our practice, we take pride in providing care through a team-based approach. This means that throughout your cataract surgery journey, you'll work with several dedicated professionals—each with a unique role in supporting your vision and overall health.



Optometrist – Your optometrist will evaluate your eyes both before and after surgery. They will work closely with your surgeon to coordinate post-surgical care, monitor your recovery, and ensure all of your needs are met.

Technicians – Our trained technicians perform the advanced diagnostic tests and precise eye measurements that guide your treatment plan before surgery and help track your progress afterward.

Surgeon – You will meet your surgeon at your pre-operative appointment, where you'll discuss your individual needs and finalize your personalized surgical plan. Your surgeon will then perform your cataract procedure.

Surgery Counselor – Think of your counselor as your guide through the process. They will explain your cataract surgery options, answer your questions, schedule your appointments, and serve as your main point of contact along the way.

Physician Assistant (PA) – To ensure your safety, a PA will complete a thorough medical history and physical screening, confirming you are healthy and ready to move forward with surgery.





Insurance and Cost

Standard cataract surgery is considered a medical procedure and is billable to Medicare and other medical insurance providers. Specific criteria must be met for cataract surgery to be billable, including functional complaints and decreased visual acuity. Surgery is subject to the insurance's deductible, as well as co-insurance or co-pay. The cost for advanced technology with cataract surgery is not a covered benefit by any medical insurance. It is considered a refractive service, which means it is excluded. Therefore, there is an out-of-pocket expense associated with the advanced options that are offered. The cost of the upgraded services is in addition to the insurance amounts due.



Making Your Decision

Your vision is essential. That's why we focus on providing the most patient-focused experience for all of our cataract surgery patients. Our expert team of surgery counselors is available to answer any questions you have about your surgery. In addition, each of our renowned cataract surgeons is an experienced, board-certified physician. You can trust that the entire team at West Texas Eye Associates will listen to you and provide you with the best possible cataract care from your evaluation, all the way through your post-op appointments.

