



GUIDE FOR CATARACT SURGERY PATIENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1. BEFORE CATARACT SURGERY**
- 2. AT HOME ON THE DAY OF YOUR CATARACT SURGERY**
- 3. IN THE HOSPITAL ON THE DAY OF YOUR CATARACT SURGERY**
- 4. IN THE HOSPITAL AFTER YOUR CATARACT SURGERY**
- 5. AT HOME AFTER YOUR CATARACT SURGERY**
- 6. POSSIBLE POSTOPERATIVE SYMPTOMS**
- 7. DRIVING A CAR AFTER CATARACT SURGERY**
- 8. CHECK-UP AFTER CATARACT SURGERY**
- 9. SECONDARY CATARACT**
- 10. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

WELCOME TO CATARACT SURGERY!



The goal of this guide is to help you prepare for your upcoming surgery and the postoperative recovery.

1. BEFORE CATARACT SURGERY

Prescription eye drops

- Electronic prescriptions for eye drops have been made for you at your preoperative appointment.
- Purchase the eye drops from a pharmacy well in advance, because the eye drops are started immediately after surgery.

Contraindications for surgery

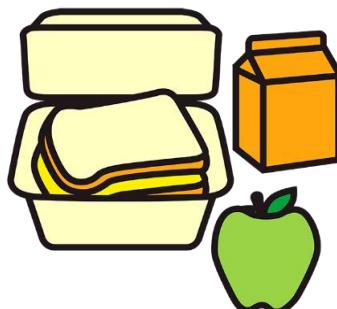
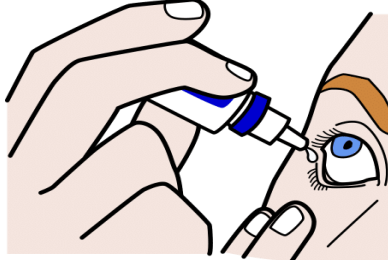
- Common cold, fever, sore throat, gastroenteritis, or other sudden infectious disease.
- Infection, cold sores, shingles, chronic infection sites (in the teeth, for example), or eye infection with discharge.
- If your blood pressure is elevated, please contact your local health center for possible monitoring, and for starting or adjusting medication.

Other matters

- Purchase skin tape from a pharmacy. Skin tape is used to attach a protective shield over your eye.
- If your functional capacity is decreased or you cannot manage your errands independently, bring someone with you to the hospital on the day of the surgery.
- Before surgery, you may use contact lenses in the eye to be operated on.
- Remove any lash extensions two weeks before surgery.
- Remove nail polish and artificial nails for the monitoring performed in the operating room.

2. AT HOME ON THE DAY OF YOUR CATARACT SURGERY

- Shower and wash your hair.
- Put on clean, loose fitting clothes, preferably with buttons in the front.
- Do not apply any fragrance or make-up. The operated area will be washed to prevent infections.
- Leave your valuables and jewellery at home.
- You may eat as usual. It is good to pack a small snack with you.
- Take your regular medication as usual. If you are currently using eye drops to reduce intraocular pressure, apply those as usual.
- Bring with you all your regular medication you would need within the next 24 hours.
- Reserve the entire day for your hospital stay.



3. IN THE HOSPITAL ON THE DAY OF YOUR CATARACT SURGERY

The surgery is performed under local anesthesia. During the operation, you will be awake and lying down. Before you are taken to the operating room, eye drops will be administered, and an intravenous cannula will be placed in your arm. It will be used to give you relaxing medication, if necessary. Some patients require more extensive anesthesia in the eye. An anesthetist will administer this.

Usually, cataract surgery is a quick procedure that is performed under local anesthesia. In this procedure, the cloudy lens will be replaced by a small artificial lens made of plastic.

You will be charged a fee for ambulatory surgery. You will be fined for missed and not cancelled appointments. The invoice will be sent to your home.



A nurse will prepare you for the surgery.

4. IN THE HOSPITAL AFTER YOUR CATARACT SURGERY

After surgery, your condition will be monitored in a recovery room and a nurse will recap the home-care instructions with you.



Your intraocular pressure will be checked in the recovery room.



You will receive written instructions on applying eye drops.

If necessary, your physician will write you a certificate for sick leave. The duration of sick leave depends on your work, and it varies from one week up to a month.

You can return home on the same day. You may go home by Kela-reimbursed taxi, in which case you will only pay the deductible. If you have chosen to be treated by HUS based on freedom of choice, please check with Kela if you can get travel reimbursement.

5. AT HOME AFTER YOUR CATARACT SURGERY

Prescription eye drops

- You will need to start applying the prescribed eye drops immediately on the day of the surgery, and you will need to use them for a few weeks.
- If you are currently using eye drops to reduce intraocular pressure, apply those as usual in the operated eye as well in the evening of the surgery day.
- You should also continue any other eye medication you have in use according to previous instructions, unless otherwise instructed.
- If you experience sensation of a foreign body in your eye, itching, or stinging in the operated eye, you can use over-the-counter moisturizing drops or gels available in pharmacies. We recommend that you use moisturizing drops, which are packed in individual pipettes, because they do not contain preservatives.

How to use the protective shield

- You will receive the shield in the hospital.
- Wear the shield on your operated eye for a week while you sleep.
- Wash the shield with soap every day.



Attaching the shield

- Place the clean shield on a table with the domed side up.
- Attach skin tape on the shield.
- Place the shield over your eye.

How to apply eye drops

Always wash your hands before treating your eye. Open the eye drop bottle so that no impurities come in contact with the dropper tip. Make sure that the dropper tip does not touch anything. Keep the tip 1 to 2 cm from the eye.

You can sit or lie down while you apply the eye drops. Tilt your head back and look up. With fingers from one hand, pull down the lower eyelid so that the inner surface becomes visible. With the other hand, apply 1 to 2 drops on the inner surface of the lower eyelid by gently squeezing the bottle or the pipette.



After dropping the drops, press the inner corner of your eye towards your nose bone for about 1 to 2 minutes. This prevents the medicine from entering the tear duct and your blood circulation.



You can watch a video on applying eye drops on Youtube on the channel HUSvideot (in Finnish).

The title is "Silmätippojen tiputtaminen".



For one week

- Make sure water does not get into the operated eye when you wash your face and hair. Otherwise, you may wash yourself as usual.
- Clean the eyelids and lashes of the operated eye daily. Wash your hands. Wet a cotton ball with water and wipe the closed eyelids and lashes of the operated eye starting from the outer corner towards the inner corner.

For two weeks

- You are not allowed to swim or have a sauna.
- Do not use any eye make-up.

For three weeks

- Avoid heavy exercise and strenuous physical exertion. Light exercise and outdoor activities are allowed. You may do regular



For four weeks

- Do not touch or rub the operated eye to keep the wound from opening.

6. POSSIBLE POSTOPERATIVE SYMPTOMS

In the evening of the surgery day, you may experience the following symptoms. They are no cause for concern.

- The eye is bloodshot or red
- There is a little bit of (bloody) discharge from the eye
- The pupil is large
- Your vision is blurry or unclear
- You have a slight sensation of a foreign body in the eye

When the recovery progresses as usual, your vision will gradually improve and the irritation and sensation of foreign body in the eye will decrease.

If your vision worsens or the irritation or pain in your eye increases, contact the eye unit in charge of your care.

If:

- Your eye is painful and pain medication does not help
- Your vision deteriorates suddenly
- An area completely disappears from your field of vision
- You see lightning strikes even while resting and the eye is closed.

**Immediately contact the Contact center for eye diseases
09 471 73400**

7. DRIVING A CAR AFTER CATARACT SURGERY

When the vision and refractive power in the eye are altered with surgery, it will take some time to get used to the new situation. Generally, you may drive only once your eye has recovered from the surgery, your vision has recovered to meet the level required for a driver's licence, and any glasses needed while driving are in use.

8. CHECK-UP AFTER CATARACT SURGERY

A check-up after surgery is recommended to take place 5 to 6 weeks later. You can have the check-up at a private ophthalmologist's practice of your choice.

The check-up is to make sure that your eye has recovered as it should, and new glasses may be prescribed if necessary. Before the check-up, you may use any glasses that feel comfortable.



9. SECONDARY CATARACT

Sometimes after cataract surgery, the capsule around the artificial lens will become cloudy in the back. This cloudiness is a kind of scar tissue called secondary cataract, or posterior capsule opacification. Majority of operated eyes will not develop secondary cataract, but if it does occur, it can be treated with laser. This minor outpatient procedure will clear the vision again.

Symptoms of secondary cataract

As the secondary cataract develops, it will gradually make your vision cloudy. Seeing in the dark will become more difficult, vision will decrease, and glare will increase.

Diagnosing secondary cataract

An ophthalmologist can diagnose secondary cataract with an eye examination.



10. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

After the surgery, I've started to see halos around lights. Are they harmless?

During the surgery, an artificial lens was placed in the eye. The edges of the artificial lens reflect light differently than the center. Especially in dim lighting, this may cause halos around lights. This is harmless.

I see floating flakes and dots in my field of vision after the surgery. Are these harmless?

Any light-colored or grayish dots and flakes are harmless. They are caused by the vitreous inside the eye. These vitreous floaters are most commonly visible in bright light and when looking at a white background. They usually become more visible after the vision-impairing cataract has been removed.

Has the surgery gone wrong when I can see only far or only near without glasses?

In cataract surgery, an artificial lens was placed inside the eye. The artificial lens only has single vision, so without glasses, you will only see near or far. For other distances, you will need glasses.

Most likely, you will not see properly with your old glasses after the surgery, but you will need new prescription glasses.

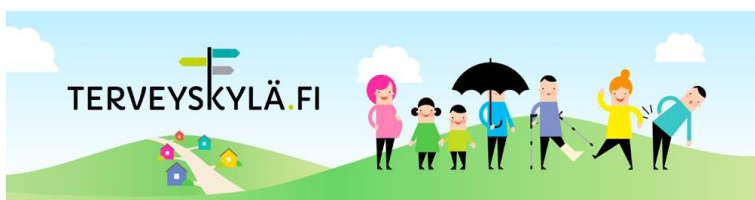


CONTACT INFORMATION

Contact center for eye diseases

09 471 73400

Instruction video on Youtube on the HUSvideot channel: “Instruction video for patients arriving to the cataract surgery”.



Questions and answers about cataract
(in Finnish):

[Terveyskylä.fi](https://terveyskyla.fi) [online service](https://terveyskyla.fi)



eService maisafi.fi



Sources:

Images: Papunet image bank, papunet.net, Sergio Palao/ARASAAC, Paxtoncrafts Charitable Trust, Kuvako, edited.

Photographs: Heli Kurimo

Frequently asked questions: Silmäsairaudet.fi in Terveyskylä webhub.