

## C. Spectacles

In the days before intraocular implants, thick glasses were used to focus the light rays onto the retina. However, the “owl-like” spectacles were thick and heavy, providing poor quality of vision. These glasses were unsuitable for patients who required cataract surgery in only one eye.

Today, spectacles are used only to correct mild residual power, if any, after the implantation of intraocular lenses. As these prescriptions are generally very mild, these spectacles are thinner and lighter and thus provide much better quality vision.

## D. Contact Lenses

Contact lenses can be used in a similar way as spectacles. However, these require special care.

## Remember:

Cataracts are the most common cause of poor vision in the elderly. It is a curable form of blindness. Do not ignore any emerging symptoms. Have regular check-ups with an eye specialist. Early detection can prevent permanent blindness.

## Where can you find The Eye Institute?

[www.tei.nhg.com.sg](http://www.tei.nhg.com.sg)  
[www.lasik.nhg.com.sg](http://www.lasik.nhg.com.sg)

**The Eye Institute @ Alexandra Hospital**  
378 Alexandra Road Singapore 159964

### Ophthalmology & Visual Sciences (Clinic C)

Opening Hours : Mon – Fri 9.00am – 5.00pm  
: Tue 5.00pm – 8.00pm  
Night Clinic : Closed on Sat, Sun & Public Holidays  
Appointments : (65) 6476 8828

**The Eye Institute @ National University Hospital**  
5 Lower Kent Ridge Road Singapore 119074

### NUH Eye Surgery Centre

Level 3, Kent Ridge Wing (Podium Block)  
Opening Hours : Mon – Fri 8.30am – 5.30pm  
Evening Clinic : Mon – Fri 5.30pm – 8.00pm  
: Closed on Sun & Public Holidays  
Appointments : (65) 6772 2002  
GP Hotline : (65) 6772 2000

### NUH Lasik Centre

Level 3, Kent Ridge Wing (next to Auditorium)  
Opening Hours : Mon – Fri 8.30am – 5.30pm  
: Closed on Sat, Sun & Public Holidays  
VCC Hotline : (65) 6772 2020

**The Eye Institute @ Tan Tock Seng Hospital**

Level 1, TTSH Medical Centre  
11 Jalan Tan Tock Seng Singapore 308433

### TTSH Eye Centre (Clinic 1A)

**TTSH Eye Centre (Atrium)**  
Opening Hours : Mon – Fri 8.00am – 5.30pm  
: Sat 8.00am – 12.30pm  
Evening Clinic : Mon – Fri 6.00pm – 9.00pm  
: Closed on Sun & Public Holidays  
Appointments : (65) 6357 8000  
GP Hotline : (65) 9666 6698

### TTSH Lasik Centre

Opening Hours : Mon – Fri 8.30am – 5.30pm  
LASIK Hotline : (65) 6357 2255

**The Eye Institute @ Jurong Medical Centre**

60 Jurong West Central 3, #01-08  
Singapore 648346

Opening Hours : Mon – Fri 8.00am – 5.30pm  
Appointments : (65) 6379 3899  
General no : (65) 6551 7888  
Website : [www.jurongmedicalcentre.com.sg](http://www.jurongmedicalcentre.com.sg)

**The Eye Institute @ Yew Tee Specialist Clinic**

Yew Tee 61 Choa Chu Kang Drive  
#01-05 Yew Tee MRT Station  
Singapore 689715

Opening Hours : Mon – Fri 9.00am – 12.30pm  
: Mon – Fri 1.30pm – 5.00pm  
Evening Clinic : Tue 6.00pm – 8.30pm  
: Sat 9.00am – 12.00pm  
General no : (65) 6877 2728


**The Eye Institute @ Alexandra Hospital • National University Hospital • Tan Tock Seng Hospital  
NHG Polyclinics • Jurong Medical Centre • Yew Tee Specialist Clinic**

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# CATARACTS





## What is a Cataract?

A cataract is a clouding of the lens of the eye. The lens is a clear disc within the eyeball. It is normally transparent and is situated behind the pupil. It focuses incoming light rays to form a sharp, distinct image onto the retina, similar to the way a camera lens focuses an image onto film.

A cataract is like a dirty or cloudy camera lens. It blocks light rays from entering the eye, thus blurring vision.

A cataract is neither a tumor nor an abnormal growth of tissue in the eye. It is due to physical changes in the contents of the lens, resulting in its clouding. It is easily detected with specialised instruments used by doctors.

## What Causes A Cataract?

Cataracts can be categorised according to its underlying causes. The most common cause is due to aging, known as a **Senile Cataract**.

With **Senile Cataracts**, the normal aging process hardens and opacifies the lens, **Senile Cataracts** affect adults above the age of 50.

Patients with diabetes mellitus are prone to cataracts. **Diabetic Cataracts** tend to cause fluctuating vision.

An eye injury may damage the lens resulting in **Traumatic Cataracts**.

**Congenital Cataracts** are present at birth. It is usually hereditary or caused by an infection that has affected the pregnant mother and unborn child.

**Secondary Cataracts** are cataracts caused by other diseases of the eye or body.

## What Symptoms Are There?

The main symptom is blurred vision. Other symptoms include glare, poor vision in bright surroundings, seeing multiple images and the need for frequent spectacle prescription changes.

## What Treatment Is Available?



Treatment for a cataract is warranted when it affects a person's lifestyle. Surgery is the only effective way to remove a cataract. Fortunately, cataract surgery is usually highly successful with more than 90% of patients regaining good vision.

This high success rate is attributed to advances in surgical microscopes, wound suturing, effective prevention of infections and early mobilization. Most cataract surgeries are performed as day surgical procedures without the need for hospital admission.

Cataracts cannot be removed with medication. The decision for removal of the cataract should be made only after consultation with an eye specialist.

Vision may worsen several months after cataract surgery due to the thickening of the posterior capsule. Fortunately, this can be improved with an outpatient laser treatment known as a capsulotomy.

### Phacoemulsification

This is a recent advancement in the technique of cataract surgery. Using ultrasonic power, the cataract can be removed through a smaller wound. Suturing is usually not required and restoration of vision is faster.

With the removal of the lens, an artificial lens is needed to substitute the function of the focusing of light rays onto the retina. This can be achieved in the following ways:

#### A. Intraocular Lens Implants

These are artificial lenses placed in almost the same position as the natural lens of the eye. These are permanent implants which require no maintenance.

#### B. Foldable Intraocular Lens Implants

The latest advances in implant technology: these new implants can be folded and implanted into the eye through a small wound. The implants are then unfolded into their positions in the eyes. As these implants require only a small wound, it heals quickly and visual quality is excellent.