



The Leeds
Teaching Hospitals
NHS Trust

Day Case Cataract Surgery

Information for patients



Leeds Centre for
Ophthalmology

This leaflet aims to give you information about what will happen when you come for your Day Case surgery for your cataract.

What is a cataract?

The lens is the part of our eye, which helps focus pictures clearly and sits behind the pupil. As we age the lens gets older and becomes cloudy. This is called a cataract. It is not a skin over the surface of the eye as is commonly thought. If it is left alone the only thing a cataract will do is stay the same or get gradually worse. It does not damage the eye but it does gradually block off the vision so that sight may be lost.

General information before surgery.

If you are having a local anaesthetic, you will be awake during the operation and your eye will be numbed. Take all your usual medications and eat and drink as normal. If you take Aspirin, Clopidrogel, Rivaroxaban, Dabigatran, Apixoban or Warfarin please continue to take as normal.

For patients taking warfarin, please have your usual blood test (INR) during the week before your surgery. This will save time for you on the day of surgery.

If you are having a general anaesthetic, you will be put to sleep for the operation. You will need to follow the fasting instructions in your letter. You will also need to arrange for someone to collect you after the operation and stay with you for 24 hours.

You are advised not to travel home by public transport irrespective of having a local or general anaesthetic.

What happens on the day of the operation?

The unit is a patient drop off area only. No relatives are allowed unless deemed necessary for medical reasons. On your arrival you will be welcomed to the day case unit, the procedure for the day will be explained to you by your named nurse and preparations are made for going to theatre.

This includes having lots of eye drops put into your eye to make the pupil large enough for the operation, and the skin above your eye being marked for surgery. Your named nurse will walk or transport you by wheelchair into the anaesthetic room, which is next door to the operating theatre.

When can I go home?

Patients having a local anaesthetic will be offered tea and biscuits following surgery. Once you have received your discharge information and feel able to do so, you can go home.

Patients having a general anaesthetic will need time to recover from the anaesthetic. The time differs for each individual. Once you have recovered and the person collecting you has arrived on the ward you will be given your discharge information and you will be able to go home.

Will it hurt afterwards?

If you have discomfort you may take your usual painkiller eg, Paracetamol, which should relieve the pain. If the pain is severe, contact the hospital for advice. You may feel a pricking sensation, your eye may water, you may have some double vision - all of these are common.

What happens next?

If your surgeon feels it necessary, you will be asked to return the following day.

Otherwise remove your eye dressing and clean your eyelids as follows:

- Remove your eye dressing; keep the plastic shield to wear at night for seven nights.
- Wash your hands.
- If your eye is sticky, using cooled boiled water and cotton wool balls, clean your eyelids outwards wiping from the corner next to your nose. Dispose of the cotton wool after each wipe.

You will have been given eye drops after your operation, you can now start using these as follows:

- Tilt your head back or lie in a chair.
- Gently pull the lower lid away from the eye.
- Place dropper close to the eye socket (not touching).
- Look up.
- Place one drop into the space between the lid and the eye.
- Gently close your eye and blink slowly several times.
- Do not rub your eyes.
- Keep instilling your eye drops as instructed until you come back to clinic. Bring the drops with you.

People often feel that their eye is a little bruised, aching and gritty - this is common and normal. Vision is usually brighter straight away. The sight may be much better or it may still seem blurred. Don't be alarmed. This blurring virtually always clears with time but it may not be until glasses are prescribed that vision will finally be as good as it can be.

Occasionally pre-existing problems at the back of the eye will limit how good the final results can be. Such problems include glaucoma, ageing changes, previous blocked blood vessels, diabetic damage or scarring at the back of the eye. Patients who have had their second cataract removed are often disappointed, initially forgetting how long their first eye took to settle down. If you have any problems during this time, contact the hospital on one of the numbers on the next page.

Will I still require glasses after surgery?

Most artificial lenses have a fixed focusing power for either clear distance or clear near vision. Dependant on the lens you choose, glasses will be required to correct your near or distance vision.

It is best to wait around six weeks after surgery before getting an eye test for your new glasses from the optician.

When can I drive after surgery?

Driving is not advisable for a few days after surgery. Legal requirements need to be met and everybody is different. As a general rule, if you were legally driving before your surgery and the vision has improved after a few days, then you should be able to drive. However, if you feel your vision is worse or you have an imbalance between your eyes, then please seek the advice of your optician.

Please contact us if any of the below occur:

- Increasing pain.
- Worsening of vision - especially when things had seemed better immediately after surgery.
- Increasing yellowish discharge.
- Any new floaters.
- Any injury to your eye.

If it is felt necessary for you to be seen then you will be asked to come to eye casualty or the next appropriate out-patient clinic.

If you have problems before the out-patient visit, contact:

Ophthalmic Day Unit J25 (for advice within the first 24 hours after surgery)

(0113) 206 9125 or (0113) 206 4761

Monday -Friday 07.30am - 6.00pm

Eye Clinic **0113 206 4737**

Eye Casualty **0113 206 4566**

Waiting List Team **0113 206 5672 / 206 5915**

Eye Appointments **0113 206 4615**

Emergencies only

For weekends contact:

St James's Switchboard **(0113) 243 3144**

(Ask for the eye doctor on-call).

What did you think of your care?

Scan the QR code or visit bit.ly/nhsleedsfft

Your views matter



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