

Clouding After Cataract Surgery

Patient information leaflet — posterior capsule opacification and YAG laser

Your cataract has not come back

A cataract cannot return: the natural lens was removed and cannot regrow. What can happen, months or years after surgery, is that the thin clear membrane holding your lens implant in place becomes cloudy. This is called posterior capsule opacification. It is common, it is not a complication of your surgery, and it is straightforward to treat.

What you may notice

- Vision becoming gradually misty again, much as it did before your cataract surgery
- Increasing glare from headlights or sunlight
- Reading becoming harder despite correct glasses
- A general loss of contrast, as though looking through a fine haze

The treatment: YAG laser capsulotomy

A laser makes a small opening in the centre of the cloudy membrane so that light passes through clearly again. It is performed in the clinic, takes two to three minutes per eye, and is not painful — the eye is numbed with drops, you rest your chin on a support, and you see flashes of light and hear small clicks. There is no cutting and no stitches.

Afterwards

- Vision is blurred for a few hours and usually clears by that evening or the next morning.
- Your pupil is dilated for the procedure, so please arrange not to drive yourself home.
- You may see a few new floaters for some days — these are fragments of the membrane and settle.
- Anti-inflammatory drops are used for a few days and the eye pressure is checked afterwards.
- Normal activity can be resumed immediately.

Does it need repeating?

No. Once the opening is made it stays open, and the treatment is not required again in that eye.

Contact the clinic if, in the days after treatment, you develop

- A sudden shower of floaters or flashing lights
- A curtain or shadow across part of your vision
- Pain, or vision that becomes worse rather than better

Reviewed by Dr. Aysun Yucel Gencoglu, MD, FEBO, FICO.

Notes for you from today's consultation