

Cataracts

- **What is a cataract?** A cataract is a clouding of the lens within your eye which affects your vision. It causes blurred vision like looking through a foggy or frosty window.
- **When does one get cataracts?** Over the age of 60 everyone slowly starts developing cataracts. One may get cataracts at an earlier age if one has had an injury to the eye, used steroids, have diabetes or have had excessive UV exposure. Rarely cataracts can be present at birth as well.
- **What are the symptoms of cataracts?**
 - Blurred or hazy vision even with glasses
 - Reduced color saturation and density
 - Increase of glare and halos from lights
- **What is the treatment for cataracts?** The early stages of cataract development can be managed by changes to your glasses prescription. Once the cataract gets dense and the symptoms above start to affect the quality of your life the cataract can be replaced surgically. It is a very common and highly successful surgery where the surgeon breaks up and removes the old lens with a small vacuum like probe and replaces it with a clear artificial lens. It is done outpatient under local anesthesia.
- **What do I need to do when diagnosed with cataracts?** The following is recommended to slow down the progression of cataracts: wear UV protective glasses or sunglasses, keep diabetes under control and avoid smoking. It is very important to see your eye doctor on a regular basis to monitor the progression of cataracts. Waiting too long can lead to hardening of the lens which complicates the surgery so it should be checked every 6 months to yearly for progression.

