

## **Cataract Surgery**

### **What is a cataract?**

A cataract is a progressive clouding of the lens of the eye which is clear when you are young and becomes cloudy as you age. The cloudy lens causes blurry vision and glare as it prevents light from focusing sharply on the retina. Everyone eventually develops cataracts if they live long enough. A cataract is not a film over the eye, caused by overusing the eyes, nor is there any medicine available to prevent the growth of cataracts.

### **What is the treatment for a cataract?**

There is no known medication available anywhere in the world that helps cataracts. The only treatment for a cataract is surgery. The time for cataract surgery is when the individual cannot see to accomplish their activities of daily life. This is different for every person. Obviously an airplane pilot will want surgery earlier than someone who does not drive or read. Commonly a change in your glasses can delay the need for surgery.

### **How is cataract surgery performed?**

Cataract surgery is the most commonly performed surgical procedure in the United States and usually very successful. It is usually an outpatient procedure and performed under local anesthesia. The lens is broken up using high frequency sound waves and removed through a tiny incision and an artificial lens, called an IOL, is placed in the location of your own natural lens.

### **What will my vision be like after cataract surgery?**

Many people have better vision after cataract surgery than they ever had before and it may be possible to obtain good near and far vision without the need for glasses.