

HEALTH AWARENESS DEPOT FOR THE MONTH OF AUGUST



"Every human being is the author of his own health or disease."
- Buddha

August is National Cataract Awareness Month

Introduction:

Many seniors think that new glasses and a stronger prescription is all they need to get back the vision of their youth. A cataract is a build-up of proteins on the lens causing a clouding effect. They start small and develop slowly, which is why so many sufferers are sixty and above. However they can develop at any age.

Cataracts may be the cause for the decline in vision. This condition is the leading cause of vision loss among adults 55 and older. In fact, more than half the people over age 65 have development of some degree of cataract.

What are the symptoms?

- † Halos around headlights at night.
- † Blurred vision.
- † Colors appear faded.
- † Double vision.

Know your risk factors:

- † Ultraviolet radiation from sunlight and other sources.
- † Diabetes.
- † Hypertension.
- † Obesity.
- † Smoking.
- † Prolonged use of corticosteroid medications.
- † Statin medicines used to reduce cholesterol.
- † Previous eye injury or inflammation.
- † Previous eye surgery.
- † Hormone replacement therapy.
- † Significant alcohol consumption.
- † High myopia.
- † Family history.
- † Oxidative changes in human lens – These can be prevented by consuming fruits and vegetables rich in antioxidants.

Reduce your risks:

-  Use UV-rated sunglasses when outdoors and wear a wide-brimmed hat when spending long hours in the midday sun.
-  One of the best things anyone can do for their eyes and overall health is to quit smoking or never start.
-  People with diabetes can reduce cataract risk by carefully controlling their blood sugar through diet, exercise and medications if needed.

Be informed about when to consider surgery. This decision is really up to each person based on his or her daily activities and related vision needs. The concept that the cataract is "ripe," or ready, is no longer considered a valid reason for surgery. After age 65, most people will see their Eye M.D. at least once a year, where they will have their vision tested and learn whether cataracts are growing. But only an individual can determine whether symptoms like glare, halos, blurriness, dimmed colors or other cataract-related problems are making activities like driving and reading difficult or impossible.

When preparing for surgery you will need to give your doctor your complete medical and eye health history, including especially whether you are or have taken medications which cause the iris to move out of its normal position, which can lead to complications during cataract surgery. You can still have successful surgery if your surgeon knows you have taken these drugs and adjusts his or her surgical technique. If you have had LASIK or other laser refractive surgery, it is important to provide your pre-surgery vision correction prescription to your Eye M.D., if possible.

Cataract Treatment:

When symptoms begin to appear, you may be able to improve your vision for a while using new glasses, strong bifocals, magnification, appropriate lighting or other visual aids.

Think about surgery when your cataracts have progressed enough to seriously impair your vision and affect your daily life. Cataract surgery is very successful in restoring vision. In fact, it is the most frequently performed eye surgery. Nine out of 10 people who have cataract surgery regain very good vision, somewhere between 20/20 and 20/40. During surgery, the surgeon will remove your clouded lens and in most cases replace it with a clear, plastic intraocular lens (IOL). New IOLs are being developed all the time to make the surgery less complicated for surgeons and the lenses more helpful to patients. Presbyopia-correcting IOLs potentially help you see at all distances, not just one.

Reference Links:

-  <http://www.allaboutvision.com/conditions/cataracts.htm>
-  <http://www.aao.org/newsroom/release/20100726a.cfm?RenderForPrint=1&>
-  <http://coopervision.com/blog/august-cataract-awareness-month>
-  <http://www.eyecareamerica.org/eyecare/news/August-is-National-Cataract-Awareness-Month.cfm>

For any enquiry or assistance please contact: wellness@medicaretpa.co.in

Disclaimer: No information contained here should be relied on in making health decisions. Always check with your doctor or other health care provider.