



cataract

a closer look

WHAT IS A CATARACT?

A cataract is a clouding of the normally clear lens of the eye. It can be compared to a window that is frosted or yellowed.

The amount and pattern of cloudiness within the lens can vary. If the cloudiness is not near the center of the lens, you may not be aware that a cataract is present.

There are many misconceptions about cataract. Cataract is not:

- A film over the eye;
- Caused by overusing the eyes;
- Spread from one eye to the other;
- A cause of irreversible blindness.

Common symptoms of cataract include:

- A painless blurring of vision;
- Glare, or light sensitivity;
- Poor night vision;
- Double vision in one eye;
- Needing brighter light to read;
- Fading or yellowing of colors.



Left, normal vision. At right, dulled or yellowed vision.



Blurring or dimming of vision

WHAT CAUSES CATARACT?

The most common type of cataract is related to aging of the eye. Other causes of cataract include:

- Family history;
- Medical problems, such as diabetes;
- Injury to the eye;
- Medications, especially steroids;
- Radiation;
- Long-term, unprotected exposure to sunlight;
- Previous eye surgery;
- Unknown factors.