

Pediatric Cataract

This material will help you understand a cataract and how it is treated.

What is cataract?

A cataract is a clouding of the lens of the eye. It can be very small or affect the entire lens. Cataracts are very common among adults over the age of 65. Normally, the condition develops very slowly as people get older and the proteins in their lenses break down.

Children can also have cataracts though the cause is different. If a cataract blocks light from entering your child's eye, it can affect his/her visual development.

What causes cataract in children?

Pediatric cataracts often occur because of abnormal lens development during pregnancy. Cataracts can be genetic, metabolic or can occur spontaneously, with no known cause.

How is cataract treated?

If your child's cataract is affecting his/her vision, it should be removed right away. An eye doctor can do surgery to remove the lens of the eye. During surgery, the doctor may replace your child's lens with a permanent intraocular lens (IOL). This helps the eye restore its focusing ability. Glasses and contact lenses can also help the eye focus after the lens has been removed.

If a cataract is small and/or does not block the center of the lens, it may not need to be removed because it will not affect your child's visual development. However, your child should still have regular eye exams to monitor his/her vision. If your child shows signs of vision problems, your child's eye doctor

may recommend glasses or eye patching. This may help your child avoid or delay having surgery.

For more information, scan these codes with your smartphone or visit the websites listed.



<http://www.aapos.org/terms/conditions/31>

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