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Dear Patient,

You have been diagnosed with a cataract and the information in this folder will help you better understand what a cataract is, how cataracts are treated and what options are available for your treatment. In order for you to make an informed decision as to how you would like to proceed with treatment, please take the time to thoroughly review all the information in this folder. After reading the information in this folder, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Cataract refers to a clouding of the lens of the eye. It is usually the result of the natural aging process. Symptoms of cataracts may include blurred or double vision, dulling of colors, inability to see well in bright light, halos around lights and glare when driving, difficulty reading in low light, and a frequent need to change glasses prescriptions. A cataract can gradually progress until there is complete loss of functional vision in the eye. Surgery is the only way to correct a cataract that causes significant vision impairment. If a cataract is affecting your vision enough to interfere with your daily activities, you should consider surgery. Cataract surgery is the most common and one of the safest surgical procedures performed today.

During surgery the cataract is removed and an intraocular lens (IOL) is placed inside the eye to replace the cloudy natural lens. If surgery is recommended for you, there are several lens replacement options available, some of which can significantly decrease your dependence on glasses. The following is some general information about lens options for cataract surgery:

Standard Monofocal Lens: Monofocal lenses provide clear vision for a single distance and are usually chosen to make your distance vision clear without glasses, although some patients prefer to have better reading vision without glasses. With a monofocal lens implant for distance, there is a high likelihood you will need to wear glasses for near and intermediate vision tasks such as reading the newspaper, doing crossword puzzles, dialing a phone, or working at a computer even if you do not currently wear glasses for these activities. Some patients prefer to have uncorrected near vision with both eyes and only wear glasses for distance. The cost of surgery with a monofocal IOL implant is covered by Medicare and most commercial insurance plans with the standard out of pocket expenses such as your deductible, co-pays, and/or co-insurance. Monofocal implants have been the standard option for intraocular lens implantation.

Monovision with Standard Monofocal Lenses: Some patients prefer to have different IOL powers in each eye such that one eye can see distance without correction and the other eye can focus at near without correction. This is called monovision. This can be successful and allows the patient to become less dependent on glasses. With monovision the cost of surgery is covered as described with standard monofocal lenses.

Toric Intraocular Lens: Toric intraocular lenses are designed to address lens replacement for those patients with significant **astigmatism**. Astigmatism is an irregularity of the shape of the cornea (the clear window at the front of the eye). Astigmatism causes blurred or distorted vision. Patients with significant amounts of astigmatism choosing a standard monofocal replacement lens usually need glasses to correct their vision at all distances following surgery. A toric lens makes it possible to reduce or eliminate astigmatism and significantly improve uncorrected vision following surgery. Most patients who have a toric lens implanted in both eyes have no need for glasses for distance activities such as watching TV, driving, and viewing sporting events. They may only need reading glasses for near vision activities. Medicare and most commercial plans will cover the cost of surgery with a standard monofocal lens, but there is an additional out-of-pocket expense for a toric lens. Affordable monthly payment options are available.

Multifocal Lens: A multifocal lens is an advanced technology lens designed to restore vision at near, far and in between. These advanced technology lenses are intended to meet active lifestyles by providing patients with a range of vision not achievable with a standard monofocal lens. A multifocal implant can minimize or even eliminate the need for glasses for most activities such as reading, driving, watching television, or computer work. There are several types and brands of multifocal lenses to provide patients the opportunity to see things and perform activities at all distances ***with a minimal need for glasses.***

During your visit, you will receive a thorough examination to determine if you are a good candidate for a multifocal IOL. Medicare and most commercial insurance plans will cover the cost of surgery with a standard IOL, but there is an additional out-of-pocket expense for patients choosing a multifocal lens. We offer affordable, interest-free monthly payment options that make the multifocal lens an affordable option.

No procedure or implant is perfect and you will need to discuss the potential benefits, risks, limitations, and alternatives with your doctor to determine what is best for you. Not everyone is a candidate for the advanced multifocal or toric lenses, and we will be happy to determine if either of these lenses is a good option.

Sincerely,

Dr. Steven Unterman
Dr. Joseph Parelman