

A PRACTICAL
GUIDE FOR
MANAGING ON
YOUR OWN

PREPARING FOR CATARACT SURGERY

GETTING READY, UNDERGOING, RECOVERING



STEADY COMPANION

www.steadycompanion.co.nz

Introduction

Cataract surgery is one of the most common and successful procedures performed in New Zealand.

People notice that their vision has gradually become cloudy, blurred, or dull over time, and the operation is done to restore clearer sight. Even though it is routine for clinical teams, it can feel unfamiliar and worrying if you are attending on your own.

This guide explains what to expect before, during, and after surgery so you feel more prepared, supported, and at ease.





Feeling nervous

... is very common.

People worry about:

- losing control during the procedure
- being awake during surgery
- damage to the eye
- pain during or after surgery
- not being able to see properly afterwards
- getting home safely
- managing alone after the operation

The truth is, it's quick, safe and straightforward.





What is a cataract?

A cataract is when the natural lens inside your eye becomes cloudy.

This can cause:

- blurred vision
- glare from lights
- difficulty reading
- faded colours
- trouble seeing at night

Cataract surgery replaces a cloudy lens with a clear, artificial lens.

Your lens has no nerves and cannot feel pain.



Before your surgery you will be asked to:



- use prescribed eye drops
- follow instructions about eating and drinking
- arrange transport to and from the clinic or hospital

You will not be able to drive yourself home after the procedure.

It is important to organise this in advance.



Things to prepare for the day:

- Check you know exactly where to go and the time you need to be there
- Eyedrops in a handy place
- Comfortable, easy clothing laid out
- A space at home to rest, set up how you'll need it
- Someone to check in on you afterwards
- Food and drink there for your return
- Clear a path in your home to your resting space - remove trip items, like cords, cables and foot-stools

Ensure you've told concerned people where you're going and why

Prepare a Go Bag with

- **Any medication**
- **ID**
- **Any paperwork**
- **Glasses**
- **Telephone and charger**



On the day



- Do not drive yourself
- Arrive with plenty of time so you feel calm
- Comfortable, loose clothing
- Bring a companion if you can, for reassurance and support

Meet the clinical team and check in.

Then, when all is ready, you'll go to the operating room where -

- The eye area will be numbed using drops
- You will stay awake but relaxed
- The surgeon will remove the cloudy lens & replace it
- **This often takes less than an hour**
- You may notice bright lights, but few people experience any pain



After the procedure



It's over!

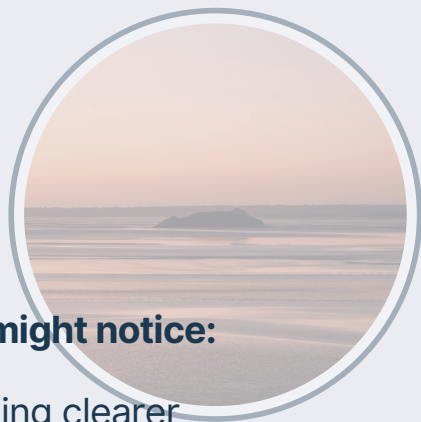
Immediately after, you might have

- blurred vision
- a watery or gritty eye
- light sensitivity
- mild discomfort
- tiredness

They might cover your eye with a protective shield - this is normal. Enjoy your rake-ish look.



At home recovery



In the first few days, you might notice:

- vision gradually becoming clearer
- mild irritation
- sensitivity to light
- tiredness

Helpful recovery tips:

- take it easy at home
- **avoid rubbing the eye**
- use the prescribed eye-drops exactly as directed
- wear sunglasses outdoors
- avoid dusty environments

Usually, people will improve over days to weeks



Important Safety Information



Seek medical advice if you experience:

- sudden worsening pain
- rapid loss of vision
- increasing redness
- discharge from the eye
- severe swelling



Everyday Activities

You will usually be advised to:

- avoid driving until cleared by your doctor
- avoid heavy lifting and straining
- avoid swimming until advised it is safe
- take care when showering - no water in the eye

Most normal light activities can usually be resumed gradually. Don't push yourself, take time.



Steady Companion - how we can help



A companion for:

- transport
- companionship
- helping you get prepared
- settling in back at home
- overnight support

Where appropriate, and with insurer approval, a companion may be able to drive your own car.

This is not medical care. It is steady, capable support from someone who understands how these days can feel.



Steady Companion support may help if:



- you live alone
- family live far away
- friends are unavailable
- you feel anxious about managing on your own
- you've been told someone must accompany you

From a worried friend :

Hi Lizzie

I am so, so impressed and delighted with the notes from H. It's exactly what we need to help support M through the surgery. She has nothing but the highest praise for her experience. We've just been talking about the day of the cataract surgery and wondering if H could be there again... It's a weight off my mind knowing she is in such a safe pair of hands.



Final Thoughts

It is pretty common to feel worried about having Cataract surgery.

With preparation and the right support from the right people, the day can feel much calmer and more manageable.



Take things slowly.
Ask for help when you need it.
Let people support you.



your checklist

A guide to help you feel ready.

Before the day:

Appointment time and exact location confirmed

- **Read instructions:** review all the guidelines
- **Eye drops** collected
- **Sunglasses** ready
- **Plan your transport:** to and from the hospital, allowing plenty of time

The day before:

Take the hospital or clinic number with you **Check any instructions about not eating or drinking**

- **Go Bag** ready
- **Phone** charged
- **Comfortable clothes** laid out
- **Home and food** prepared
- **Eye drops** to hand
- **Pickup time** confirmed



your checklist

A guide to help you feel ready.

On the day:

- **Get up and dussed with ample time**
- **Take your Go Bag**
- **Leave for the treatment with plenty of time**
- **Check you've left a clear path to where you'll relax later**

At home

- **Rest quietly**
- **Use the eyedrops as instructed**
- Take things slowly, don't push yourself, recovery takes time
- Keep lighting gentle
- Know who to call if worried

“One step at a time.”



Steady Companion can help you

- **Get organised:** we can help with organising what you need for prep and for post procedure
- **Drive Car:** we can drive your car, to and from the hospital
- **Stay:** we can check-in with you or stay with you overnight

info@caringstay.co.nz and we can email you

“One step at a time.”



Steady Companion

from CaringStay Limited

Your kind, strong supporter



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