



JUNE

Yelm Family Medicine Patient Newsletter



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In this issue

June is National Cataracts Awareness Month

Prevent Blindness:

Cataracts are the leading cause of vision loss in the United States, and it is the leading cause of blindness in the world. There are 24 million Americans over the age of 40 who are affected by cataracts, so it seems fitting that an entire month should be dedicated to education and awareness.

In anticipation of Cataract Awareness Month, here are some common questions and answers about cataracts:

What is the treatment for cataracts?

treat.

Cataracts are a clouding of the lens of the eye, which prevents passage of light into the eye. The solution to cataracts is **cataract surgery**, which requires a surgeon to remove the deteriorated lens and replace it with an artificial lens called an intraocular lens or **IOL**. Over 3 million Americans undergo cataract surgery annually, making it one of the most common surgeries in the United States. In fact, the entire surgery lasts only about 20 minutes, and most people can resume normal activities the fairly rapidly.

Is cataract removal safe?

Cataract surgery is one of the safest and most effective surgeries with a success rate of 95 percent.

Yelm Family Medicine would like to congratulate everyone who is graduating this June. We wish you much happiness and may all of your dreams for the future come true.



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Your surgeon will remove your clouded lens and replace it with an intraocular lens (IOL). Only a miniscule incision in the cornea is necessary to do this procedure, and it can be completed in about 15 minutes in an outpatient surgery center

Do cataracts only affect seniors?

Cataracts can affect anyone! Most people do not show symptoms of cataracts until at least the age of 40, cataracts can also affect young adults or even children. Heredity, disease, eye injury and [smoking](#) could cause cataracts to develop at an earlier age.

Can I prevent cataracts?

There is no proven way to prevent age-related cataracts. However, choosing a healthy lifestyle can slow the progression of cataracts. Some ways to delay the progression of cataracts include avoiding smoking, reducing exposure to [UV rays](#), eating [healthy foods](#), and

wearing [proper eye protection](#) to avoid eye injury.

Cataract Symptoms: Cloudy Vision

Cataracts are the most common cause of vision loss in people over age 40 and the principal cause of blindness in the world. Today cataracts affect more than 22 million Americans. With cataracts being such a large concern for an aging population, it is important to be informed about signs and symptoms. Most age-related cataracts develop gradually, and as a result, many people do not notice signs or changes right away when cataracts first develop.

[Cataract symptoms](#) progress over time and can include:

- Painless cloudy, blurry or dim vision
- More difficulty seeing at night or in low light
- Sensitivity to light and glare
- Seeing halos
- Faded or yellow colors
- Double vision within one eye
- A need for bright light for reading

Cloudy vision is the loss of visual acuity or a dimming of visual

perception that can affect one or both eyes. Cloudy vision is a haziness or lack of clarity in your eyesight, much like looking through a cloudy piece of glass. Cloudy vision can dull color perception and is often accompanied by glare or halos around lights. Sometimes cloudy vision may result in discharge from the eyes, tearing or serious causes such as trauma to the eye.

Although the term cloudy vision is sometimes used to describe blurred vision, the two changes in vision are different. Blurred vision is most often caused by [refractive error](#) which can be corrected by eyeglasses or contact lenses.

Occasionally cloudy vision can be a sign of medical emergency. Call 911 or seek immediate medical care if cloudy vision is a result of a chemical injury or trauma or if cloudy vision occurs along with other serious symptoms. These symptoms may include eye pain, sudden change of vision or blindness, sudden weakness or numbness on one side of the body.

[Talk to a physician](#) to learn more about your [cataract symptoms](#) and the [treatment options](#) available to you.