

Radio Production Guide

Cataracts (types, signs and symptoms and treatment)

1. Fact Sheet

What are cataracts?

- Cataracts are the clouding of the normally clear lens of one or both eyes
- A cataract begins when proteins in the eye form clumps that prevent the lens from seeing clear images
- Cataracts usually develop slowly and don't disrupt your eyesight early on, but over time cataracts will interfere with your vision
- For people who have cataracts, seeing through cloudy lenses is a bit like looking through a foggy window

[\(Healthline\)](#)

Types of Cataracts

- Age-related cataracts are the most common kind of cataract and are classified based on where they form in the eye
- Congenital cataracts, which are present at birth or form during a baby's first year, are less common than age-related cataracts
- Secondary cataracts are linked to being caused by disease (i.e. glaucoma and diabetes) or medications (steroid prednisone)
- Traumatic cataracts develop after an injury to the eye, but it can take several years for this to happen

[\(Kellogg Eye Center\)](#)

Did you know?

Cataracts are common! By age 65, over 90 percent of people have a cataract. Here are some signs and symptoms to be aware of:

- Clouded, blurred or dim vision
- Increasing difficulty with vision at night
- Sensitivity to light and glare
- Need for brighter light for reading and other activities
- Seeing "halos" around lights
- Frequent changes in eyeglass or contact lens prescription

- Fading or yellowing of colors
- Double vision in a single eye

If you or someone you know is experiencing these signs or symptoms visit an eye doctor or a local clinic to explore your options and recommendations for treatment.

[\(Mayo Clinic\)](#)

In rare cases, children and babies develop cataracts in the first few years of their lives; this is normally due to trauma to the eye or cataracts initially being overlooked. It's important to identify and treat them as early as possible because not treating cataracts can seriously affect their development. Symptoms to look out for in children and babies include:

- Grey or white cloudiness in the black part of the eye (pupil)
- "Red eye" missing in photos or the eyes appear different in photos
- Rapid eye movements

[\(All About Vision\)](#)

What you can do!

Treatment - Surgery is typically recommended when cataracts prevent you from going about your daily activities. Cataract surgery may sound a bit daunting at first, but it is extremely common, generally very safe and has a high success rate. Most people can go home the same day as their surgery. Procedures may include:

- A surgical method that involves the use of ultrasound waves to break the lens apart and remove the pieces.
- Extracapsular surgery involves removing the cloudy part of the lens through a long incision in the cornea. After surgery, an artificial intraocular lens is placed where the natural lens was.

Although there is no way to prevent cataracts from forming, evidence suggests that the following may slow the progression of cataracts:

- Protect your eyes from UVB rays by wearing sunglasses outside
- Have regular eye exams
- Stop smoking
- Keep diabetes and other medical conditions in check

[\(Healthline\)](#)

Resources

- [What is a cataract?](#)
- [Cataracts: Symptoms and causes](#)
- [How will I know when to have cataract surgery?](#)
- [Cataracts in Babies \(congenital cataracts\)](#)
- Remember to check out local resources: newspapers, community-based organisations and medical providers!

2. Mini Radio Guide and Formats

Preparing for the show

Different ways to talk about cataracts

- Ways to identify signs and symptoms of cataracts
- Causes and types of cataracts
- How to treat cataracts
- Myths and traditional remedies

Choose an angle

-----> Ways to encourage early treatment of cataracts

Different ways to talk about encouraging treatment of cataracts

- What are the signs of cataracts?
- What to do when you or someone you know is experiencing symptoms
- Where do you go for examines and treatment?

FORMATS

Interview

Interviews aim: To ask the interviewee/s questions and have a discussion around the show topic. Keep an eye on the time! Try to keep interviews to about 6 minutes.

Who do you talk to: An eye doctor or doctor from a local clinic

Suggested questions for your interview with someone who knows about cataracts and eye health (local eye doctor, clinic doctor or nurse):

- ★ What are cataracts?
- ★ What are the symptoms of cataracts?
- ★ Can babies and children get cataracts?
- ★ What are signs of cataracts in babies or children that adults can look out for?
- ★ What are the consequences of babies or children not being treated for cataracts early?
- ★ What are the procedures to treat cataracts in children and babies?
- ★ What are the procedures to treat cataracts in adults?

Please see interview questions in “How to present your show”

PSA

The aim of a PSA: To create a public awareness message. Keep your PSA short and sweet! Allot about 30 seconds and do not exceed 45 seconds for a PSA.

[Sounds of a baby]

Voice 1: Wow! Thandi, congratulations! What a beautiful baby! She's the picture of health! Oh, but I see some cloudiness in her eyes, no?

Voice 2: Yes, I've noticed too but I think maybe it will just clear up?

Voice 1: No, friend. I think this might be a sign of cataracts.

Voice 2: But she's a baby! Only older people get cataracts.

Character: While cataracts are very common in people over 65 years, some babies can be born with cataracts, also known as congenital cataracts. Without early intervention, congenital cataracts cause other serious eye conditions that can profoundly impact a child's learning ability, personality and appearance. Make sure your child's eyes are examined regularly and as soon as possible after your baby is born.