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Q: What is a cataract?

A: A cataract is a yellowing or cloudiness of the crystalline lens inside your eye. The lens is located just behind the colored part of your eye (the iris). If a cataract is developing, vision will seem cloudy or blurry, and colors will be dull. Glare issues are often noted, especially with nighttime driving. Most cataracts gradually occur in the elderly and are the result of a normal aging process. However, there are some systemic diseases and certain medications (such as steroids) that can cause cataracts. So it's not impossible for other forms of cataracts to occur at other times of life, including birth.

With most age-related cataracts, the removal process is fairly straight-forward. You are awake during the out-patient procedure, which can take as little as 12 minutes per eye. Positive visual results can be seen within a few days, with full recovery occurring in about one month. Modern technology has certainly streamlined the process and decreased negative risks.

If you think you may have cataracts, visit your optometrist for a comprehensive eye examination with dilation.

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