

## The Need for Eyeglasses after Cataract Surgery

Eyeglasses are required for correcting blurred vision due to “refractive errors” of the eye. Refractive errors are conditions in which light does not come to a sharp focus on the retina. Refractive errors have traditionally been corrected with eyeglasses, contact lenses, and refractive surgery, such as LASIK. Refractive errors consist of nearsightedness, farsightedness, astigmatism and presbyopia.

Nearsightedness: Distant images are blurry.

Farsightedness: Near images are blurry as well as distant images.

Astigmatism: This often occurs along with nearsightedness and farsightedness. It is due to the oval shape of the cornea or lens. It causes both distant and near objects to be blurry.

Presbyopia: The focusing muscle in the eye changes the shape of our lens to help us between distant and near objects. This ability gradually decreases after age 40.

Traditional intraocular lens implants placed in the eye at the time of cataract surgery do not correct astigmatism. Furthermore their shape cannot be altered so one is rendered presbyopic. Very careful measurements are made prior to surgery to minimize any nearsightedness or farsightedness, although some amounts of these refractive errors may still remain after surgery. Because of these reasons many patients require eyeglasses for both distant and near objects after cataract surgery.

### **Refractive Surgery to Reduce or Eliminate Eyeglasses after Cataract Surgery**

Cataract surgery is usually covered by your insurance whereas refractive surgery is not, but we do offer a reduced price for these services if Dr. Lipstock is performing your cataract surgery. Please ask a member of our staff for further information about cost.

Limbal Relaxing Incisions (LRI's): This is for the treatment of astigmatism. It does not correct nearsightedness or farsightedness. One or two tiny relaxing incisions are made at the edge of the cornea at the time of cataract surgery. These help round out the cornea. No extra recuperative time is involved. LRI's are not as accurate as other refractive surgery techniques, such as LASIK or PRK, but they are less expensive and easily performed by the surgeon at the time of cataract surgery. After surgery, if even clearer vision without eyeglasses is desired, LASIK or PRK can then be performed and the cost for the LRI's will go towards the cost of those procedures.

LASIK and PRK: These are laser vision correcting procedures. They reshape the corneal window of the eye reducing refractive errors. Both LASIK and PRK are very accurate for getting the eyes to see clearly without eyeglasses at a specific distance. But after cataract surgery these techniques cannot resolve presbyopia and the difficulty changing focus from distance to near. Usually the eyes are corrected to see distant objects without eyeglasses and reading glasses will still be required. Sometimes one eye is set for distance and the other for near so as to get around the problem of presbyopia. For more information about LASIK and PRK please speak to a member of our staff.

## **Crystalens**

Crystalens is an exciting new type of intraocular lens implant used for cataract surgery. It successfully restores much of one's ability to focus both far and near. It is an implant that is injected into the eye with the same type of cartridge presently used for traditional implants, so the surgical technique and safety is very similar to traditional cataract surgery. Crystalens combined with the other refractive surgery techniques mentioned above is now the most advanced and successful way to eliminate or at least greatly reduce one's dependence on eyeglasses forever. For more information please speak to a member of our staff.