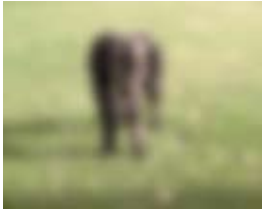


# What is a cataract?



**A cataract stops you seeing clearly**



Version 1 - Nov 2010

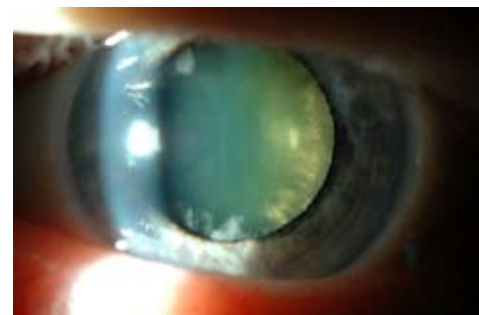
SeeAbility Easy Read Factsheet 6

Our eyes need to be healthy for us to see well.



Inside your eye is a lens which helps you see.

Having a cloudy lens is called a cataract.



You can have a cataract in one eye or both eyes.

People often get a cataract when they get older.

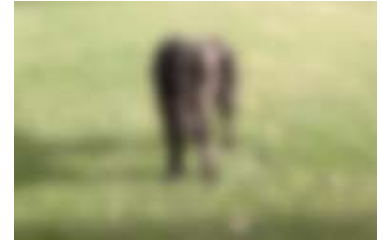


It is not just older people who get cataracts. You can get a cataract at any age.

**It is important to get help for your cataract.**

# When you have a cataract:

- Your sight becomes blurred.



- It can be hard and uncomfortable to see in bright light.



- You might not be able to see colours very well.



- You might not be able to see people very well.



- You might begin to bump into things or knock things over.



- You might worry about falling over or getting lost.



- It might be harder to do the things you enjoy.



Things like cooking, reading, watching TV, going out and doing activities.



## Some people with a learning disability might not be able to say they have a sight problem.

It is important that supporters notice changes in you that may be caused by a sight problem.

Supporters need to make sure you have regular eye tests.



### They need to notice if :

- You bump into things more.
- You worry about going out.
- You find it harder to recognise people.
- You don't want to do activities you enjoy.



If you have problems with your sight go to see your Doctor or Optician straight away.

A doctor or optician can tell you if you have a cataract.



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Cataracts do not get better on their own.

If you don't do anything about them they will get worse.



There is no medicine that stops cataracts.



If your cataract is new your doctor may tell you that new glasses or sunglasses will help you see better.



If your sight cannot be fixed by new glasses you may need an operation to remove the cataract.

## A cataract operation.

A cataract operation will help you see well again.

See our Easy Read Factsheet 7 called 'Having a cataract operation' for more information about cataract operations.



## Choosing to have an operation or not

You can choose whether to have a cataract operation or not.

It is important that people spend time explaining things to you so you make the right decision.

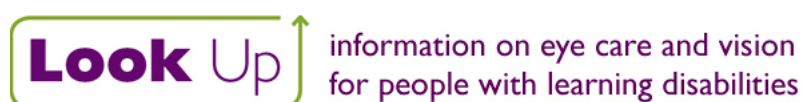


This factsheet and factsheet 7 'Having a cataract operation' will help you decide. Factsheet 8, 'Consent and Capacity' explains the law about helping you make big decisions.

It also explains what people need to do if you find it hard to make this decision for yourself. **Go to [www.lookupinfo.org](http://www.lookupinfo.org) to see all our Easy Read Factsheets.**

We would like to thank Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust for their kind support and co-operation in helping us to develop this factsheet.

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