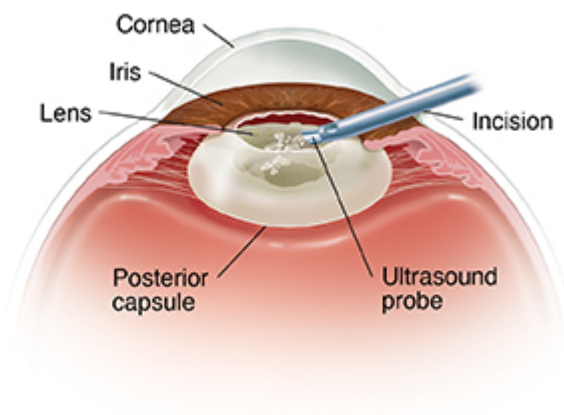


Cataract Treatment: Removing the Cloudy Lens

A cataract is a clouding of the lens in your eye. Surgery can be done to remove the cataract and replace the lens. This can help you see better. The two most common ways to remove a cataract are phacoemulsification and extracapsular extraction.

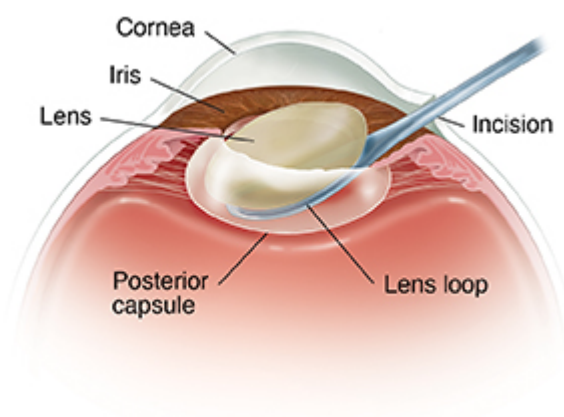
Phacoemulsification

A small cut (incision) is made in the cornea. This is the clear cover on the front of your eye. Or a cut may be made in the white part of your eye (sclera). Then an opening is made in the anterior capsule. This is the front portion of the thin outer covering of the lens. A tiny ultrasound probe is inserted into the lens through the opening in the anterior capsule. Sound vibrations from the probe break the cloudy lens into tiny pieces. The pieces are then suctioned out. Stitches may be needed after this is done.



Extracapsular extraction

This method makes a larger cut in the cornea. The entire lens can then be removed at once through the cut. Stitches are used to close the cut after the procedure.



Implanting an IOL

After the cloudy lens is removed, it's replaced with a plastic lens called an IOL (intraocular lens).