Cataract Surgery Class Video Transcript

Welcome to your Kaiser Permanente online cataract class. We hope to help you better understand cataract surgery and your options to consider before meeting your doctor. Hopefully by the end of this video you will feel more educated and confident about your journey to cataract free vision. Let's start with an overview of the topics that will be covered during this video. First we will explain what cataracts are and how cataract surgery is performed. Then we will discuss the vision options that you have with your surgery. Understanding your vision priorities will help you and your surgeon select the lens implant that is best suited to your lifestyle. We will also briefly discuss what to expect in this journey before, during, and after surgery. In order to best prepare you for meeting your surgeon, after this video there will be a few key questions we'd like you to ask yourself and decide: do I need my cataract surgery now, or can I wait? What are my vision goals after surgery? Which working distances are the most important in my daily activities? Am I interested in pursuing a toric or multi-focused lens implant? Would I prefer having both eye surgeries on the same day, or what I prefer having surgery on separate days? Now let's take some time to learn more about cataracts and cataract surgery.

If you have cataracts you're not alone. By age 40, over 20.5 million Americans will have started to develop cataracts. But a lot of people don't know much about cataracts.

Here's how they develop.

Cataracts are a normal part of life. You start off with a clear lens that focuses light for clear vision. But over time protein builds up then keeps getting denser until it eventually clouds the lens making it more difficult for light to pass through and clearly focus.

This causes symptoms like cloudy, blurry, or dim vision, and sensitivity to light and glare. Cataracts can even make colors appear dull and faded. Symptoms like these slowly develop over time and can end up making everyday activities more and more difficult. The good news is you can correct it with surgery. Which replaces your old cloudy lens with a new artificial lens?

Cataract surgery is one of the most common surgeries in the country. Nearly four million of them are performed in the U.S. every year. And based on a Johns Hopkins report 95 percent of cataract surgery patients in the U.S. experienced improvements in their vision. So it's a really successful surgery. Are you ready to get on the path to better vision? Simply removing the cataract usually improves the visual clarity since the cloudy lenses gone. With today's technology, many patients are pleased to discover that we can often also reduce the need for glasses for some activities. As you just learned, a lens implant is placed in your eye during cataract surgery. There are many different lens choices available and patients can often feel overwhelmed. Let's try to simplify things. When you think about which lens option may be right for you we find that it's best to start thinking about the working distances you use most from day to day?

What is a working distance? It's the distance from your eye to whatever you are focusing on. We generally use our vision for tasks at three main working distances: far, arm's length, and near. We use a far working distance for activities like driving watching TV and movies and playing sports. We use an arm's length working distance for activities like using a computer or tablet,

reading a recipe on the kitchen counter, and reading labels at the grocery store. We use a near working distance for activities like reading a book or receipt, using a cell phone, threading a needle, and applying makeup. Now that you know more about working distances, start considering which working distances are most important to you in your daily activities. Prioritizing which working distances are most important to you will help your surgeon decide the best lens implant to help you reach your goal. As we begin to explore your lens implant and vision options with cataract surgery, let's first discuss some qualities that all lens implants have in common. All available lens implants are artificial and not identical to the lens you were born with. The various surfaces and edges of the implants can sometimes create visual side effects like light reflections and shadows. If noticed most people perceive them less over time and usually are very pleased with the overall improvement of their vision after surgery – since it is usually much clearer than seeing through the cataract. Though most patients achieve their desired vision targets, some patients have unpredictable healing, which may sometimes lead to patients still needing glasses to sharpen their vision even at the targeted working distance.

As such, we cannot guarantee a specific visual outcome after surgery.

There were several categories of lens implants. First, we'll discuss the standard single focus lens. This lens can emphasize one specific working distance like far, arm's length, or near. This lens is covered by your health insurance, so there is no additional cost. If you choose this lens after your surgery you'll likely be able to see better at one working distance without glasses assuming you don't have much corneal astigmatism which we will discuss shortly. You will likely still need to use glasses to see best for the other two working distances. Let's learn about possible vision outcomes using the standard single-focus lens. What might your vision be like without glasses, if you choose this lens to target a far working distance? After your surgery we would expect you to see better for far vision activities often without being dependent on glasses. However, you'll still need glasses for arms length and near vision activities. Most patients say this lens causes the least amount of halos or streaks from lights when driving at night. What might your vision be like without glasses if you choose this lens to target a near working distance? After your surgery we would expect you to see better for near vision activities often without being dependent on glasses. However, you'll still need glasses for far and arms length vision activities. WIth glasses, most patients are able to drive comfortably at night. What might your vision be like without glasses if you choose this lens to target an arm's length working distance?

After your surgery we would expect you to see better for arms length vision activities often without being dependent on glasses. However you'll still need glasses for far and near vision activities, and again, with glasses, most patients are able to drive comfortably at night.

Now let's continue to learn more about how astigmatism can affect your vision both before and after cataract surgery. Did you know by the time people turn 65, 90 percent will have started to develop cataracts, and around 52 percent of cataract patients also have astigmatism? With so many of us potentially affected by these two conditions, let's learn more. Cataracts and astigmatism both affect how light passes through your eye. But cataracts cloud your natural lens and block light, while astigmatism prevents light from focusing on the retina.

Astigmatism means that the cornea is shaped more like a football instead of being rounded like a basketball. This is why light can't properly focus and your vision is blurry. If you don't wear your

glasses. Fortunately, there's a way for you to correct both conditions with one procedure and improve your vision. By selecting an astigmatism correcting lens for your cataract surgery. This is because its unique design corrects the blurriness of astigmatism and replaces your naturally cloudy lens. After the procedure your vision will be clearer, brighter, and less blurry. And you may even reduce your dependency on glasses. Your lens choice is important especially if you want to decrease your dependency on the glasses you wear to help correct your astigmatism.

Let's learn more about toric lens implants. Most everyone has some degree of corneal astigmatism. It can be mild and insignificant, or in many people, it can make up 20 to 50 percent of their glasses prescription, which is significant. Your doctor will determine if you have a significant amount of astigmatism and whether you are a candidate for a toric lens implant. If you do have a significant amount of astigmatism and we use a standard single focused lens, you will still need glasses to correct your astigmatism and sharpen your vision for all three working distances. However, if we use a toric lens to help reduce your astigmatism during your cataract surgery, then we can help reduce your dependence on glasses for the one working distance that you choose. There is an additional per eye cost if you choose a toric lens as it is not covered by health insurance. Let's see an illustration of the potential benefits of a toric lens implant for patients with significant astigmatism. Before cataract surgery, this image might represent your vision with a cloudy cataract and astigmatism. If you choose the standard, single focus lens, after cataract surgery your vision will still be out of focus without glasses due to your astigmatism. However, if you choose a toric lens to reduce your astigmatism, after cataract surgery we expect that your vision without glasses would be sharper for the working distance you chose. Keep in mind the toric lens is still a single-focus lens, so you'll need to choose which one of the three working distances you'd like to target with this option.

To summarize, these are your options if your doctor determines you have significant astigmatism. Now, if you choose the standard single-focus lens, targeting a far working distance, there is no additional cost for the lens and you will still need glasses to correct your astigmatism and sharpen your vision for activities at all working distances. However, if you choose a toric astigmatism-reducing lens, targeting a far working distance, there is an additional per eye cost for this lens. This lens can help reduce your dependence on glasses for activities at a far working distance, but you would still need glasses for activities at arms length and near working distances. Alternatively, you can choose a toric lens targeting an arm's length or a near working distance instead just like the standard lens. Now let's learn more about another category of lenses – multi-focus lens implants. These lenses work best in patients who have healthy eyes with no other problems besides cataracts? Your doctor will determine if you are an ideal candidate, as not every person is a candidate for these lenses. The multi-focus lens has the potential to help reduce your dependence on glasses for two or three working distances and can also reduce your astigmatism if needed. There is an additional per eye cost if you choose a multi-focus lens as it is not covered by health insurance. These lenses work best when implanted in both eyes. Let's see an illustration of the potential benefits of a multi-focus lens implant.

If you choose a single focused lens targeting a far working distance, your vision after cataract surgery might be similar to this image with a clearer far vision, but out of focus near vision without glasses. We would expect you to need reading glasses 100 percent of the time to read things like labels or price tags. You could still wear bifocals or progressive glasses after cataract surgery to see at multiple working distances. By contrast, if you choose a multi-focus lens, your

vision after cataract surgery might be similar to this image with clearer vision at multiple working distances without glasses. However, with multi-focus lens implants there is a tradeoff. In order to enjoy the increased range of vision provided by multi-focus lenses, there is some compromise to the quality of vision which is most visible at night, primarily noticeable as glare starburst or halos around lights. With a single focused lens your night vision might appear similar to this. Most patients say this lens causes the least amount of halos or streaks from lights when driving at night. With a multi-focus lens your night vision might look more like this with glare, starbursts, or halos around lights. For some patients these effects can be very mild and easy to adapt to. However, some patients find these effects to be more noticeable and bothersome to the quality of their night vision. Multi-focus lenses can give you a better range of vision to see at multiple working distances reducing your dependence on glasses.

There are multi-focus lenses that can emphasize two working distances and lenses that can emphasize all three working distances. Again, there are tradeoffs to each option. Let's learn about possible vision outcomes using multi-focus lenses. What might your vision be like without glasses if you choose this lens to target both far and arm's length working distances? After your surgery, we would expect you to see better for far and arms length vision activities often without being dependent on glasses. Depending on how often you look at small print and dim light, reading glasses may still be needed 20 to 30 percent of the time. Compared to a standard lens, this multi-focus lens option can cause more glare, starbursts, and halos around lights when driving at night. However, compared to other multi-focus options, targeting these working distances generally creates the least amount of night vision issues. In today's digital age, many patients like this option because it helps their vision for activities like driving, TV, computer, and tablet use. This lens works great in good lighting for far and arm's length. Now in dim lighting, like when reading a menu in a candlelit restaurant, you may need extra light or reading glasses. What might your vision be like without glasses if you choose this lens to target all three working distances? We call this the trifocal lens option. After your surgery we would expect you to see better at all three working distances with less dependence on glasses. Depending on how small the print is and how much lighting you have, you will at times still need glasses for near vision.

For many patients this may mean just needing reading glasses 10 to 20 percent of the time. Again there is a tradeoff to having an increased range of vision. Patients with this lens will generally notice more glare starbursts and halos around lights when driving at night when compared to the previous multi-focus option and single-focus lenses. Many patients are excited by this option because it covers the broadest range of working distances with the possibility of having the least dependence on glasses overall. However, this comes with the compromise of noticing more obvious halos around lights at night. Just like with other multi-focus lenses, choosing this lens does not mean that you will never need glasses. If the lighting is poor or the print is very small, you will still need reading glasses to sharpen your vision. Just to recap, there are multi-focus lenses that emphasize two out of the three working distances and tend to have less noticeable halos and glare compared to trifocal lenses. A trifocal lens can give you a broader range of vision but may cause more noticeable halos and glare compared to the other multi-focus lenses. Both will cause some degree of halos and glare compared to the standard lens. Both lenses have the same cost per eye. Please note that not every patient experiences halos and glare in the same way, even if they have the same exact ones. Some patients perceive the halos and glare to be mild and other patients perceive them to be more significant.

Many patients will adapt and notice these less over time – similar to adjusting to seeing through water spots on a window. However, if you are not willing to tolerate some degree of halos and glare around lights at night, a single-focus lens might be the best option for you.

Again some patients may have unpredictable healing which may create the need for prescription glasses to fine-tune their vision at all working distances. If you are interested in a multi-focus lens option, please discuss your visual goals with your surgeon. There is another way to achieve a broader range of vision. Some people use contact lenses or LASIK to focus one eye for far and one eye for arm's length or near vision. We call this monovision. If you have already adapted to monovision it could be a tried and true option to employ with cataract surgery. However, if you have never tried monovision before, we do not recommend doing this with your surgery, since not everyone is able to tolerate having each eye focused at different working distances. This is an extremely exciting time to have cataract surgery.

The implant technology we have to offer today is remarkable. Even the standard lens can afford many people less dependence on glasses and has no additional cost aside from your surgical copay. If you have significant astigmatism, the toric lens can sharpen your vision without glasses and carries an additional cost. If you desire a broader range of vision, multi-focus lenses can reduce your dependence on glasses for multiple working distances and carries an additional cost.

Depending on your budget and your desires, prioritizing clarity versus range, you are likely to be very pleased with your results. Now that you have learned more about cataract surgery and your lens options, let's talk about the next steps in your journey to surgery. You will need an appointment with our staff to measure your eyes for the lens implant.

You will also have a consultation with the surgeon at which time your eyes will be dilated. We will remind you to have someone drive you on the day of your surgery. Following your surgery, you'll have a post-operative visit. And finally, about four to six weeks after your surgery, you will have an appointment with the optometrist to confirm your eyes have fully healed and to check for any needed prescription glasses. It's important to inform us if you have had any prior eye surgery like LASIK, PRK, or RK. If this was performed outside of Kaiser Permanente, please try to obtain those records and bring them in to your surgeon. These surgeries affect our lens implant selection process and limit the accuracy of your eye measurements.

As previously mentioned, you will have an appointment with our staff to measure your eyes for the lens implant. It is very important for contact lens wearers to stop wearing their contacts prior to the appointment. Contact lens usage can change the shape of your eye which can make the lens implant measurements inaccurate. Soft contact lenses will need to be out of your eyes for a shorter period of time than rigid contacts.

When you schedule your appointment for the measurement of your eyes please let our staff know if you wear contact lenses. You were probably wondering about travel restrictions after cataract surgery. Usually there are no flying or altitude restrictions. However, It is important to keep all post-operative appointments and be available for any additional care that may be needed after surgery. Please discuss with your doctors how soon you can drive after surgery. This can vary from patient to patient. Another decision to discuss with your doctor is whether you are a candidate to have both cataract surgeries performed on the same day. This is called bilateral

cataract surgery. Not every patient is a candidate, but your surgeon can help you decide if this is an option for you. If your surgeon determines that you are a candidate for bilateral cataract surgery, here are some benefits that you may consider. You would only need to arrange transportation for one surgery day. You will only have one surgical copay. You can update post surgery classes faster, and you will have fewer office visits before and after surgery. Don't worry we won't patch both eyes closed. Your vision may still be blurry but you will be able to see through clear shields or goggles after surgery. It is important to understand the risk and benefits of your surgery. Most patients noticed better vision following cataract surgery. In fact, a Johns Hopkins study found that 95 percent of patients who experienced cataract surgery in the U.S. had improvement in their vision.

As with any other medical procedure, there are risks with cataract surgery. These can include infection, inflammation, delayed visual recovery, the need for additional visits, medications, or surgery, and even worsened vision. Overall, these risks are rare. Every patient is unique, however. Pre-existing eye conditions may increase the risk of complications. Pre-existing eye conditions may also limit the improvement in vision following cataract surgery. At your consultation your doctor will be able to discuss how any pre-existing eye conditions may limit the outcome of your surgery. Now that you are more informed about the journey to cataract free vision, you can decide if this is the right time to proceed with surgery. If your cataracts are mild and not yet interfering with your daily activities, surgery can be delayed. Cataract surgery is not urgent. There will be a copay for your cataract surgery. Copay amounts vary depending on your health insurance plan. For the lens implants, please remember that if you choose a toric or multi-focus lens, each will incur additional out-of-pocket costs as they are not covered by your insurance. Now that you've watched this video, please consider your answers to these questions. Do I need my cataract surgery now or can I wait? What are my vision goals after surgery? Which working distances are the most important in my daily activities? Am I interested in pursuing a toric or multi-focus lens implant? Would I prefer having both eye surgeries on the same day or would I prefer having surgery on separate days?

You might want to jot down some notes after watching this video to help communicate your answers to your surgeon? We hope you've enjoyed learning about cataract surgery. We are excited to take great care of you during your journey toward cataract free vision.