



Thomas P. Finley, OD

Dr. Finley received his Bachelor of Science degree from St. Francis College in Pennsylvania, and his Doctorate of Optometry from the Pennsylvania College of Optometry. Following graduation, he served as an optometrist in the U.S. Air Force and was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal and the Commendation Medal.

Dr. Finley has served as an adjunct clinical professor for three optometry schools and has been a clinical investigator for two major contact lens companies. He has published several articles in professional and trade journals and local newspapers, as well as lectured at many conferences throughout the area.

Dr. Finley is a Fellow of the American Academy of Optometry, a Fellow of the Virginia Academy of Optometry, and a member of the American Optometric Association, Virginia Optometric Association, Northern Virginia Optometric Society, and Armed Forces Optometric Society. He is an Advisory Board member for TLC Laser Eye Centers, and area Administrator for Vision Source, a national network of independent optometrists.

Locally, Dr. Finley serves as an active member of the Herndon Rotary Club (past president), Chamber of Commerce (past board member), Optimist Club (youth sports' coach), Knights of Columbus (past board member), and current board member for the Jeannie Schmidt Free Clinic. He was awarded Herndon's "Distinguished Service Award," the Chamber of Commerce's "Small Business of the Year Award," and The Times Newspapers "Best Eye Doctor Award." He has owned his practice in Herndon since 1989.

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Cataracts: A Lot Different From Grandma's

By Thomas P. Finley, OD

Cataracts are one of the leading causes of vision impairment in the United States, and are fortunately treatable.

Everyone will eventually develop them if they live long enough. Ninety percent of people age 65 and older will have some form of cataracts.

A cataract is a clouding of the normally clear lens inside of the eye. As the clouding increases, light is unable to properly focus on the back of the eye resulting in decreased vision.

This is similar to looking through a window that becomes dirtier and dirtier. It becomes harder to see through.

Eventually the lens becomes so cloudy that normal daily activities cannot be safely and easily performed.

Symptoms of cataracts include:

- Increasing haziness, blurred or distorted vision as if a film is over the eye.
- Increased sensitivity to lights and glare, especially at night.
- Decrease in contrast requiring an increase in light to see and read. This also causes problems

seeing at night.

- Your eyes becoming more near-sighted requiring frequent eyeglass changes.
- Double vision, shadowing, and halos around lights.
- A decrease in the brightness of colors and yellowing of whites.
- Difficulty performing daily tasks and hobbies and driving at night.

Some people will develop cataracts earlier than others based on heredity, exposure to sunlight and damaging UV rays, trauma, systemic diseases like diabetes, use of certain medications, smoking, etc.

There's no way to prevent cataracts. The best time to pursue further treatment is when the quality of life decreases due to decreased vision. Don't wait until your vision decreases so much that risk of falls increase.

Your eye doctor will keep you informed of the progression of your cataracts and recommend a good cataract surgeon when indicated.

Many are apprehensive concerning surgery on our eyes. Fortunately, with a good and experienced surgeon, cataract surgery is relatively painless.

What Happens During Cataract Surgery?

Most cataract surgeries are performed in a surgical center so no hospitalization is required. Your eye will be numbed to make you comfortable. A tiny incision is made, the clouded lens (cataract) is removed, and a replacement lens (IOL) is inserted. You're in and out in minutes. Eye drops will be used after surgery to help your eye heal. Many people are able to see better after cataract surgery without glasses than they've seen in over 50 years.

Many intra-ocular lens (IOLs) advancements are available: multifocal lenses to help you see far and up close without glasses, lenses to correct for astigmatism, and the basic single vision lens. Your eye doctor and eye surgeon can discuss the options best suitable for you.

Even though cataract surgery is one of the more successful surgeries performed, it is still surgery. Caution must be exercised. Your eye doctor will help you choose a good and experienced surgeon. We will all develop cataracts, but with today's technological advances, cataract surgery is rapidly becoming a desired option sooner versus later.



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