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# Better Vision News

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Following cataract removal, the thin, transparent capsule that surrounded the cataract is left in the eye to hold the lens implant in place. This membrane

## A Close Look at "Secondary Cataracts"

may become cloudy months or years later. This "after-cataract" or "secondary cataract" occurs when cells grow on the back capsule behind the implant making the capsule cloudy, somewhat like the original cataract did.

Following removal of a cataract, the cloudiness that can form in the cataract capsule is often referred to as a "secondary cataract" or an "after cataract."

A procedure called a **YAG** (Yttrium Aluminum Garnet) **laser capsulotomy** can remove the cloudiness and restore clear vision. The YAG laser makes an opening in the clouded capsule to let light pass through. The patient feels nothing during the procedure because the capsule has no nerve endings. This laser procedure therefore requires no anesthesia, is performed as an outpatient, and takes only a few minutes. The vision improves in a few hours and allows patients to resume normal activities immediately.

YAG laser procedures are very common. Approximately 20 -50% of patients will develop a secondary cataract a few months or a few years after cataract surgery.

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## Why Cataract Specialty?

From 1976 to 1990, our practice provided a full spectrum of eye care services to Sarasota County residents. As the local population boomed and subspecialists in other fields such as cornea, glaucoma, retina, pediatrics, ophthalmoplastics, and neuro-ophthalmology came to Sarasota, we began referring patients to these subspecialists for their specific problems, allowing us to focus on our area of expertise – cataract and lens implant surgery.

In 1990 the Sarasota Cataract Institute became a single subspecialty practice, providing ophthalmic services specific to the care of patients with cataracts. We limited the scope of the practice to patients with either a previous diagnosis of cataract, those in the high-risk group of developing one, or those who have visual complaints consistent with cataract. People in the high-risk group are those who are 60 years of age and older, have had a cataract in one eye previously, or have a family history of cataract.

Cataracts are the number one eye problem affecting seniors. By specializing in lens and refractive implant surgery, we can offer a level of service that would not be possible in a generic "full service" eye clinic. At our Institute, everything is focused on the care of the

cataract and refractive patient, from specialized staff to specialized diagnostic and surgical



equipment. Office design, patient transportation service, insurance processing, and appointment scheduling are all customized for the specific needs of our cataract patients. Even the waiting room and its selection of magazines, music, and lighting follow this theme.

Of course, the most important thing of all is the quality of surgical services the Institute provides. With the emphasis on cataract and implant surgery, Dr. Harry B. Grabow has been able to perform more cataract procedures, thereby attaining a high level of expertise that qualifies him as a specialist. In addition, Dr. Grabow is committed to the development of the “perfect cataract procedure.” To this end, he participates in meetings all over the world, which enables him to bring state-of-the-art cataract surgery right here to the people of Sarasota.

Dr. Grabow’s extensive experience with existing and emerging intraocular lens (IOL) implantation has resulted in extremely high refractive predictability, enabling more patients to see without eyeglasses than ever before. These new advances and techniques in cataract and refractive lens surgery continue to provide enormous benefits for patients, such as little or no discomfort, shortened recovery time, and rapid restoration of sight.

## Did You Know?

A cataract can never grow back after cataract surgery.

# Eyewear After Cataract Surgery



We commonly recommend glasses to patients who have undergone successful cataract

by David M. Rubin, O.D.

surgery, although often they are just for near tasks such as reading. Some people also prefer glasses to sharpen their distance vision. Generally, we hear the following comments about glasses from patients:

1. Why do I need glasses after my surgery? I was hoping I wouldn't need them.
2. I understand Medicare pays for glasses after cataract surgery.

### Why glasses after cataract surgery?

If the goal of cataract surgery is to restore clear sight **at distance**, then near vision usually requires reading glasses. Almost everyone needs some help with their near vision after cataract surgery. The good news is that many more patients are far less dependent on glasses after cataract surgery than they ever were before.

Many patients can do very well with over-the-counter reading glasses, even if that was never an option for them before. Those patients who can do well with simple reading glasses sometimes request a prescription for glasses that they can wear full time, even if there is little or no prescription on top for distance. Other patients need glasses to enhance both their distance and near vision after cataract surgery. The majority of these individuals have had a pre-existing focusing aberration called astigmatism. While advanced surgical techniques are used to reduce pre-existing astigmatism, cataract surgery eliminates cataract but may still leave some degree of astigmatism.

### Medicare pays for glasses

As a rule, Medicare does not pay **for** anything but does pay **towards** many things, including glasses after cataract surgery. The key is to know the rules. Put simply, Medicare pays towards one pair of glasses – frame and lenses – after each cataract surgery.

### Frames

Medicare pays 80% of what are called “standard” frames and lenses. In 2003, the Medicare allowed amount for a standard pair of eyeglasses in our region is \$64.64. Many patients prefer to choose a better frame costing more than the Medicare allowed amount, what Medicare calls a “deluxe” frame. In this case, Medicare beneficiaries are responsible for the difference in cost between the Medicare allowed amount for a standard frame and the upgraded cost of the deluxe frame.

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# Surgery Center Awarded Accreditation From Joint Commission

The Center for Advanced Eye Surgery was recently awarded accreditation from the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) after successfully complying with nationally established Joint Commission standards. An independent, not-for-profit organization, JCAHO is the nation's predominant standards-setting and accrediting body for health care facilities. The Center for Advanced Eye

Surgery is a Medicare approved, free-standing ambulatory surgery center specializing in eye surgery. The Center, serving numerous area ophthalmologists, is located at 3920 Bee Ridge Road, Bldg. F, Suite C, in Sarasota.

To earn accreditation, the Center had to undergo a two-day on-site survey conducted by a JCAHO survey team. To maintain accreditation, this process is repeated every three years.

"Obtaining Joint Commission accreditation is part of our commitment to continuously improve the safety and quality of patient care," said Darice Downs, R.N., Center Director. "We just want to be the best for our patients, our surgeons, our staff, and our community."

Some of the many benefits of this accreditation include improving patient care, assisting to secure managed care contracts, and fulfilling Florida licensure requirements. It is recognized as a benchmark of quality by insurers and other third parties.

Harry B. Grabow, M.D. is the founder and medical director. Murray A. Golden, C.O.E. is the administrator.

For more information on JCAHO, visit [www.jcaho.org](http://www.jcaho.org).

## Did You Know?

Sometimes parts of your eyelid may twitch for several minutes or hours. Occasional, involuntary twitching of the eyelid can occur with stress, lack of sleep, or too much caffeine.



## Eyewear After Cataract Surgery, continued from page 2

### Progressive lenses

Progressive lenses, "no-line bifocals," are treated by Medicare much like frames. Medicare beneficiaries are responsible for the difference in cost between the Medicare allowed amount for standard bifocal or trifocal lenses and the upgraded cost for progressive lenses.

### Special lens treatments

Tints, Transitions® (lenses that darken in bright light), anti-reflective coating, and oversize lenses are covered by Medicare if they are "medically necessary." Sunglasses that are in addition to regular glasses are not covered. Ultraviolet blocking agent is covered, while scratch-resistant coating is not covered.

### The future

In the future we may find no need for prescription glasses at all after cataract surgery. New intraocular lenses are on the horizon that can provide clear vision at both distance and near without glasses after cataract and refractive lens surgery. Until then it's worth knowing the rules about Medicare coverage regarding eyewear after cataract surgery.





# Where Has Dr. Grabow Been... And Where Is He Going?

Dr. Grabow attended the American Society of Cataract & Refractive Surgery (ASCRS) Symposium on Cataract, IOL and Refractive Surgery in April in San Francisco. Dr. Grabow was invited to participate in a "round-table" discussion on "micro-incision phaco," a future technique involving removing cataracts through incisions smaller than 2.0mm.

Harry B. Grabow, M.D.

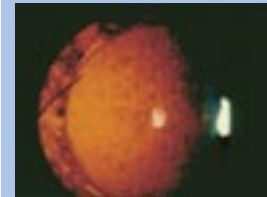
ASCRS is an international educational and scientific organization whose 9,000 member ophthalmologists specialize in cataract and refractive surgery. ASCRS members are recognized leaders and innovators in ophthalmic surgery worldwide.

**Did You Know?**  
The eye is the only part of the human body that can function at 100% ability at any moment, day or night.

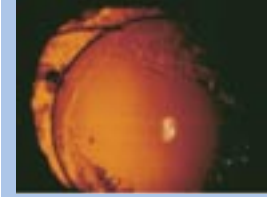
ASCRS (formerly known as the American Intra Ocular Implant Society) was formed in 1974 and Dr. Grabow has been a member since 1977.

The Sarasota Cataract & Laser Institute staff also took part in continuing education programs

at the ASCRS conference in San Francisco. Staff members attended courses to improve their knowledge and skills in order to continue to provide patients of the Institute with the most up-to-date eye care.



BEFORE



AFTER

Symptoms include blurry vision, glare or halos around lights, or a feeling of having a film over the eye. A YAG laser procedure is performed when the patient's vision is so impaired that it is

interfering with his or her lifestyle. Research studies are ongoing to develop a method to inhibit the growth of the cells that cause the cloudiness post-cataract surgery. With virtually zero recovery time and rapidly restored clear vision, YAG laser procedures are simple, non-invasive procedures that are covered by insurance and Medicare.

For more information on YAG capsulotomy procedures and on cataract surgery, visit [www.sarasotacataract.com](http://www.sarasotacataract.com).

Better Vision News is published quarterly by the Sarasota Cataract & Laser Institute.

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