

Posterior Capsular Opacity

This material will help you understand posterior capsular opacity (PCO), a common issue that can occur after cataract surgery, and how it may be treated. PCO is also sometimes called “secondary-cataract.”

What is posterior capsular opacity?

Posterior capsular opacity (PCO) occurs when a cloudy layer of scar tissue forms behind your lens implant. This may cause you to have blurry or hazy vision, or to see a lot of glare from lights. PCO is fairly common after cataract surgery, occurring in about 20% of patients.

What causes posterior capsular opacity?

During cataract surgery, your eye doctor removes the eye’s natural lens that has become cloudy. The lens is the clear structure behind the iris (the colored part of the eye). It allows you to see images clearly (see picture on right). The cloudy lens is replaced with a plastic one, called an intraocular lens (IOL).

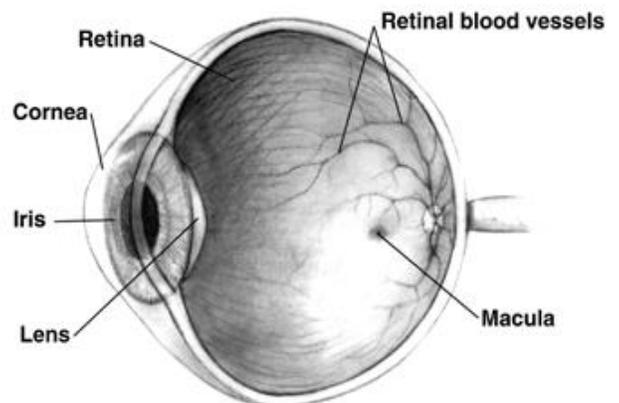


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Part of the tissue covering the lens (the capsule) is left to help hold the IOL in place. Over time, this capsule can become cloudy, leading to blurred vision and PCO.

Blurry vision caused by PCO can occur weeks, months, or even years after you have cataract surgery.

How is posterior capsule capsular opacity?

Similar to an actual cataract, PCO cause vision loss over time. When cloudy vision begins to affect your daily activities, you may want to have surgery to correct it. To regain vision, you will need to have a procedure called YAG laser capsulotomy. This is usually a short and painless outpatient procedure. Your eye doctor uses a laser to make a small opening in the clouded capsule to allow light to come through again. This procedure will only need to be performed once, as PCO cannot recur.

You and your doctor will discuss if and when you should treat your posterior capsular opacity.

For more information, scan these codes with your smartphone or visit the websites listed.



<http://www.allaboutvision.com/conditions/cataract-complications.htm>



<http://www.webmd.com/eye-health/cataracts/ndyag-laser-posterior-capsulotomy-for-cataracts>

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Author: Kathleen Koviak, MPH Candidate

Reviewers: Christopher Hood, MD, Paula Anne Newman-Casey, MD, and Alan Sugar, MD

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