

Eye on Health

Cataracts: Common Symptoms And How to Lessen Your Risk

(NAPSA)—It's wise to keep an eye on your vision. Blurred and cloudy vision can often be the first signs of one of the most common eye problems.

Cataracts are the leading cause of blindness worldwide and the leading cause of vision loss in the U.S., according to the Centers for Disease Control. An estimated 20.5 million Americans, ages 40 and older (nearly 20 percent), have a cataract in one or both eyes.

A cataract is a clouding of the lens of the eye that makes it difficult to see. In a normal eye, the lens is almost transparent and can change shape to bring objects into focus at different distances from the eye. When the lens loses its flexibility and becomes "opaque," it's called a cataract. Cataracts commonly affect distance vision and can cause significant problems with glare. Most cataracts develop slowly and don't disturb eyesight early on, but as the clouding progresses, cataracts can eventually interfere with vision.

Common signs of cataracts include:

- Cloudy or blurry vision
- Issues with glare or excessive brightness
- Appearance of halos around light
- Double vision
- Difficulty seeing at night
- Colors lacking intensity
- Frequent eyewear prescription changes

"For a person who has cataracts, vision appears cloudy or as though you have opened your eyes underwater. The blurred vision is



See your eye doctor for help with early detection and treatment of cataracts.

a result of the crystalline lens losing its transparency. When this happens it can become very difficult to see, and glare from sunlight can become almost unbearable," says optometrist Dr. Steven Gander. "Regular visits to your eye doctor can help with early detection and treatment of cataracts. If you are experiencing any change in your vision, you should immediately schedule an appointment with your eye doctor."

Some types of cataract formation have been linked to cumulative exposure to the sun's harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays. Dr. Gander suggests that one convenient way to help reduce the risk of UV exposure and to help eliminate glare is by wearing photochromic lenses like Transitions® lenses. Transitions are clear indoors and at night and automatically darken to block 100 percent of UV rays. They also help reduce painful glare, enhance contrast and promote visual comfort.

To learn more about cataracts and how to improve overall eye health, visit www.transitions.com.