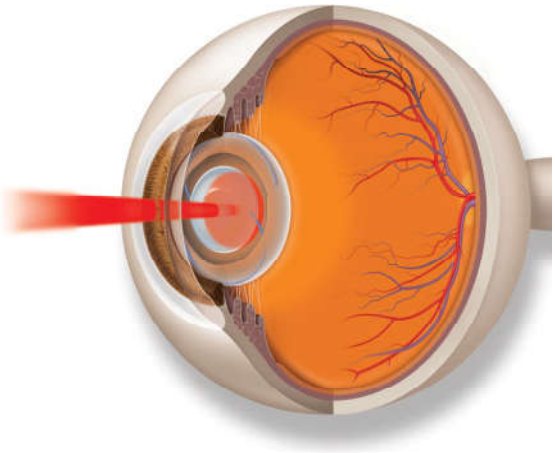
Posterior Capsulotomy

What is a posterior capsulotomy?

Posterior capsulotomy is laser surgery you might need sometime after cataract surgery. It helps you see clearly if your vision becomes cloudy again.

When you have cataract surgery, your ophthalmologist removes your eye's cloudy lens. They replace it with a clear, artificial intraocular lens (IOL). The IOL is held in place in the eye's natural **lens capsule**. Weeks, months or years later, this capsule can become cloudy or wrinkled, causing blurry vision. With posterior capsulotomy, a laser is used to make an opening in the cloudy capsule. This allows light to pass through again for clear vision.



With posterior capsulotomy, your ophthalmologist uses a laser beam to make an opening in the cloudy lens capsule behind the IOL.

What happens during posterior capsulotomy?

The procedure is done in your ophthalmologist's office. It only takes about 5 minutes. Here is what will happen:

- Your eye will be numbed with eye drops. You may be given other eye drops as well to dilate your pupil.
- Your ophthalmologist will point a special laser at the back of the lens capsule and make a small opening.
- After the procedure, usually you can do all your normal daily activities, including driving. Your ophthalmologist will tell you if there are things you should not do right after surgery.
- You may need to use eyedrop medicine for one week after the surgery. Your ophthalmologist will let you know if this is necessary.
- If you have no other eye problems affecting your vision, your sight should improve in about 24 hours.

What are the risks of posterior capsulotomy?

As with any surgery, there are possible risks and complications with posterior capsulotomy. Here are some of them:

- You may have a detached retina (where the tissue lifts from the back of your eye). You may see what looks like a gray curtain moving across your field of vision. You might also see a lot of floaters. You should call your ophthalmologist immediately if this happens to your vision.

- The pressure in your eye may increase.
- The IOL might move through the posterior capsule opening.
- You may have swelling in your eye, and you may need steroid eye drops.

Watch a posterior capsulotomy video from the American Academy of Ophthalmology's EyeSmart program at **aao.org/capsulotomy-link**.

Summary

Posterior capsulotomy is a laser procedure you may need sometime after cataract surgery to restore clear vision.

When your new lens was implanted in your eye during cataract surgery, it was placed in the eye's natural capsule. Over time, this capsule can become cloudy or wrinkled, causing blurry vision. Your ophthalmologist uses a laser to make an opening in the cloudy capsule, allowing light to pass through properly again.

If you have any questions about your eyes or your vision, speak with your ophthalmologist. He or she is committed to protecting your sight.

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