



Florida Health Care News

Florida's largest health care information publication

OPHTHALMOLOGY

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Cataracts?

Improved vision tailored to your lifestyle



Photos courtesy of Birt Daubert Laser Vision



In the "old days," when people developed cataracts, they either resigned themselves to the gradual loss of vision or old-fashioned cataract surgery that removed the clouded lenses from their eyes and left them extremely farsighted, dependent upon thick glasses to bring the world into focus.

Not anymore. Modern cataract surgery has moved into the refractive realm, replacing the eye's clouded lens with a prescription intraocular lens (IOL) implant that restores clear vision

and ocular health are so varied that no single IOL will meet the needs of every cataract patient.

Many options

Financial considerations are a very real concern for patients facing cataract surgery.

"Many cataract patients rely on Medicare to cover the cost of cataract surgery," observes Dr. Friedberg, "and at Manatee/Sarasota Eye Clinic, we assure our patients that we are Medicare providers. Medicare covers cataract surgery performed with traditional monofocal IOLs. These implants have been an excellent choice for patients for many years and will continue to be a mainstay in treating cataracts."



Murray L. Friedberg, MD • Walter E. Moscoso, MD
 Robert E. Edelman, MD • Scott E. Silverman, MD
 Eric L. Berman, MD • Claiborne H. Callahan, MD
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while correcting for refractive error.

Murray L. Friedberg, MD, is a board-certified ophthalmologist with Manatee/Sarasota Eye Clinic, and he explains that advances in the fabrication of lens implants now make it possible to provide patients with postsurgical refractive correction tailored to their lifestyles.

"Cataract surgery has reached an impressive level of customization," says Dr. Friedberg, "and each new generation of IOLs moves us closer to the day when patients will be more likely to experience a glasses-free lifestyle following cataract surgery."

That doesn't mean patients won't have to make important choices, Dr. Friedberg clarifies. Patients' lifestyles

Traditional *monofocal* IOLs are manufactured with a single prescription strength. They can provide sharp, clear vision at one focal range: near, intermediate, or far.

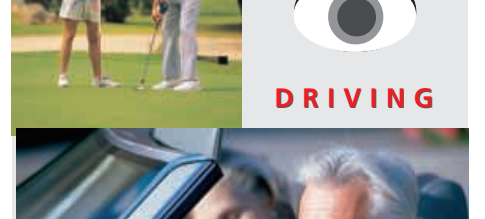
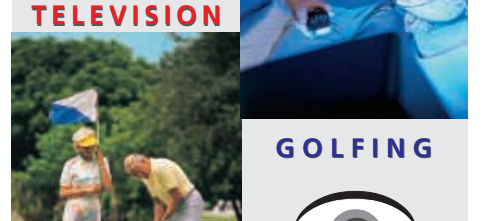
"*Bilateral* monofocal IOLs that correct both eyes for the same focal range are an excellent choice for people who spend most of their time in one visual environment or for those who value lens-free vision for one purpose but don't mind using eyeglasses for others," informs Dr. Friedberg.

Someone who spends most of the day reading or enjoying a hobby like model-building or needlework might

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Today's revolution in hearing

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CHIROPRACTIC

Solving unresolved back pain

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Cataracts?

Improved vision tailored to your lifestyle

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want to have bilateral monofocal lenses implanted to deliver crisp near or intermediate vision and then wear eyeglasses for driving or watching television.

Someone who regularly attends movies or theater productions might select bilateral monofocal correction to provide sharp distance vision and continue using bifocals or reading glasses for other activities.

The patient who wants to move more easily, and with less reliance on eyeglasses, from near to intermediate to distant vision may not do well with bilateral correction but may still want to use traditional monofocal IOLs.

That patient might find *monovision* correction to be a more suitable choice.

"To achieve monovision correction, the patient has one eye implanted with a monofocal IOL to correct for distance vision and the other eye implanted with an IOL to correct for near vision. Not everyone adapts well to this approach," cautions Dr. Friedberg, "but patients who used contact lenses to provide monovision correction before surgery often select this type of correction and do very well with it."

Someone with even more varied visual needs might be more comfortable with a *multifocal* IOL.

Multifocal IOLs work much the way bifocal or progressive eyeglass lenses do, with several prescription strengths in a single lens; they allow patients to see clearly at a range of distances.

"Although multifocal IOLs are not new, the latest generation of multifocal IOLs uses even more advanced technology to help correct for presbyopia [aging eye] as well as cataracts," informs Dr. Friedberg.

Although Medicare pays for cataract surgery, there is an additional charge for a patient to *upgrade* to a multifocal lens implant. In addition to the significant increased cost for the implant itself, additional testing and surgical procedures are needed for optimal results.

Two recently introduced multifocal lens implants include the ReSTOR (manufactured by Alcon) and the ReZOOM (manufactured by AMO). The ReSTOR lens implant uses a design that responds to how wide or small the eye's pupil might be to provide near and distance vision, whereas the ReZOOM IOL distributes light over five prescription zones to provide near and distance vision.

As with any surgical procedure, there must be a balance between the benefits of increased independence from glasses and possible side effects.

"Someone who does a lot of night driving may not be an ideal candidate for a multifocal IOL because an increased potential side effect of using this type of lens is glare or halos around oncoming headlights," points out Dr. Friedberg. "But for a patient who drives mostly during the day, this is an excellent solution in most settings."

Decisions, decisions

So many IOLs to consider, but only one goal: providing patients with the best possible results for their lifestyle.

"That means that the technology of these lenses isn't the only important factor to consider when you're contemplating cataract surgery," points out Dr. Friedberg. "It's *your*

lifestyle, *your* needs, and *your* specific ocular conditions that will guide us to the IOL that is right for you. At Manatee/Sarasota Eye Clinic, the surgeon who will actually perform the cataract surgery will conduct your examination. At that time, we will discuss the options with you and work together to determine which lens implant is the right choice for you." **FHCN—Billie S. Noakes**



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- Cornea transplants

Learn more online: To learn more about your eyes, visit Manatee/Sarasota Eye Clinic's website at www.YourEyeDoctors.com.

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