

Curing cataracts without surgery?

November 16 2015, by From Mayo Clinic News Network, Mayo Clinic News Network

Cataracts are very common. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 20.5 million Americans age 40 and over have them. Cataracts slowly cloud your vision, and people struggling with them say it's like trying to look through a frosted window. Cataracts make it difficult to read or drive a car, especially at night.

Surgery to treat cataracts involves removing the clouded lens and replacing it with a synthetic new one. This procedure is safe and very effective. But University of California San Francisco (UCSF) researchers and colleagues are exploring another approach to treatment. They're researching [eye drops](#) that may dissolve cataracts so patients don't have to go to surgery. Does it work? Right now, Mayo Clinic experts say it's too early to tell.

Mayo Clinic ophthalmologist Dr. Amir Khan says, "This research is very exciting, and it may have great potential for treating blindness. Worldwide [cataracts](#) are the leading cause of blindness. However, at this time, I would anticipate that any potential treatments for humans would be years away. I would recommend following the advice of your eye-care provider if you have decreased vision."

The study is published in the journal, *Science*.

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Citation: Curing cataracts without surgery? (2015, November 16) retrieved 28 December 2023 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2015-11-cataracts-surgery.html>

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