



Tanning industry veteran Brenda Fishbaugh is president of Eye Pro, Inc., makers of disposable eyewear. She travels extensively training salons on the effects of UV light on vision.

# How to Get "The Cadillac of CATARACTS"

This article is intended for your customers to read for their education.

*I was standing in the lobby of a tanning salon recently, when the salon professional asked to see a tanner's eyewear. The tanner said she didn't wear goggles. The salon pro replied, "You can get cataracts from tanning without eye protection." The tanner kind of shrugged and headed back to her tanning room – with no eyewear – clearly believing that cataracts are what happen to her grandma, not to her.*

Over 16 million people are blind because of cataracts. Tens of thousands will lose their sight and millions more will have poor vision because of cataracts, reports the University of Maryland Medical Center.

"Ultraviolet light can accelerate the aging process, and we see cataracts in much younger people," says Dr. Mark Kimpel, an ophthalmologist with Indiana University Medical Center. "I constantly tell young people that they might not see the damage now, but it's like sunburn; the damage is accumulating for later." Dr. Kimpel, an indoor tanner, strongly recommends wearing eye protection when tanning indoors and UV-block sunglasses outdoors.

The University of Maryland Medical Center explains that the ultraviolet (UV) light from sunlight or tanning lamps penetrates the thin skin of the eyelid. Unprotected UV exposure causes cataracts by creating changes in the lens and is also responsible for macular degeneration, which causes blindness. Ultraviolet over-exposure is responsible for creating oxygen-free radicals, called oxidants, which are unstable molecules that can cause cataracts. If you're a smoker, heavy drinker or take certain drugs, you have an even higher chance of developing cataracts, as you'll have more oxidants running around in your body.

So you tan without eyewear? Never fear! Cataract surgery is here! Cataract surgery is a relatively easy procedure; your surgeon makes an incision in your eye and uses ultrasound

to break up your clouded lens into small fragments, then uses a small vacuum to suck out the tiny pieces. A replacement lens is then placed on your eye and the incision sutured shut. A few minor details: you may need to wear big, heavy wrap-around sunglasses in bright light situations for several months, since your eyes may be very light sensitive (see photo above). There can also be complications with cataract surgery, including permanent vision loss. It's important to note that 30 percent of cataract surgery patients need another procedure in one to five years. Make sure you have good health insurance and loads of free time for recovery!



People who work outdoors (such as lifeguards, construction workers, landscapers) or live closer to the equator (Florida and Texas) have a much higher risk for developing cataracts. Make sure you are wearing UV-Block sunglasses outdoors – just wearing dark lenses that are not UV-Block certified or labeled "UV 400" is actually more dangerous than squinting in the sunlight!

Though you may be able to regain your vision with surgeries, cataracts can never be cured. Stop squinting and put on your FDA compliant eye protection! You don't want to look like THIS gal ... do you? ■

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