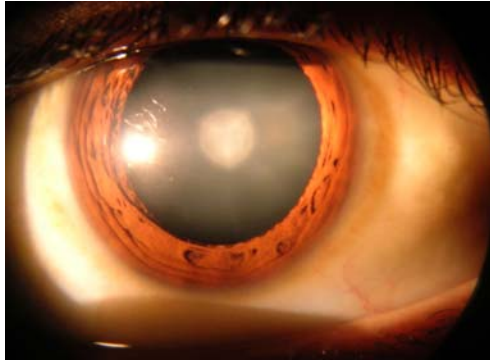


Cataract



Cataract is among the most common eye diseases. The term actually means a waterfall, and refers to the opacity of the crystalline lens of the eye on the assumption that the condition is caused by the tumor of the brain falling over the pupil.

The crystalline lens, through which light travels into the interior of the eye, is situated just behind the iris, or colored portion of the eye. In cataract, this lens becomes opaque, hence seriously hampering the entrance of light into the eye. Blindness ensues when no light rays can permeate the opacity of the lens. According to the modern medical system, a surgical operation to remove the lens or a major portion of it is the only way to get rid of the disease. The patient is provided with suitable glasses after the operation to enable him to see well enough to carry on his normal duties.

Symptoms

The first sign of cataract is blurred vision. The patient finds it difficult to see things in focus. As the cataract progresses, the patient may get double vision or spots or both. There is a gradual increase in blindness. At first, vision in twilight may be better than in full daylight since light is admitted round the more widely-dilated pupil in the dark. In the advance stage, objects and persons may appear merely blobs of light. In the final stage, there is a grayish –white discoloration in the pupil.

Treatment

Cataract is one of the most stubborn conditions to deal with, if it has become deep-seated, nothing short of a surgical operation will help in overcoming the trouble. If, however, the cataract is in the early stages, there are

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good chances of getting over the ailment by natural means. Even advanced cases can be prevented from becoming worse.

A thorough course of cleansing the system of the toxic matter is essential. To start with, it will be beneficial to undergo a fast for three to four days on orange juice and water. A warm water enema may be taken during this period. After this initial fast, a diet of very restricted nature should be followed for two weeks. In this regimen, breakfast may consist of oranges or grapes or any other juicy fruit in season. Raw vegetable salads in season, with olive oil and lemon juice dressing, and soaked raisins, figs or dates should be taken during lunch. Evening meals may consist of vegetable such as spinach, fenugreek, drum sticks, cabbage, cauliflower , carrot, turnips, steamed in their own juices, and a few nuts or some fruits, such as apples, pears and grapes. Potatoes should not be taken. No bread or any other food should be added to this diet. After two weeks on this diet, the cataract patient may start on a fuller diet on the following lines:

Breakfast: Any fresh fruits in season, except bananas.

Lunch: A large mixed raw vegetable salad with wholemeal bread or chapattis and butter.

Dinner: Two or three steamed vegetables, other than potatoes, with nuts and fresh fruit.

The short fast followed by a restricted diet should be repeated after three months of the commencement of the treatment and again three months later, if necessary. The bowels should be cleansed daily with a warm water enema during the fast, and afterwards as necessary. The patient should avoid white bread, sugar, cream, refined cereals, rice, boiled potatoes, puddings and pies, strong tea or coffee, alcoholic beverages, condiments, pickles, sauces or other so-called aids to digestion.

There is increasing evidence to show that in several cases cataracts have actually been reversed by proper nutritional treatment. However, the time needed for such treatment may extend from six months to three years. Adelle Davis, one of America's best-known nutritionists, has pointed out that animals develop

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cataracts if deprived of pantothenic acid and amino acid, tryptophane and vitamin B6 needed for tryptophane assimilation. She states that the diet of the cataract patient should be high in B2, B6, as well as whole B-complex, pantothenic acid, vitamin C, D, E and other nutrients.

The aniseed is considered a useful remedy for cataract. The patient should take about six grams of aniseed daily in the morning and evening. Equal weights of aniseed and coriander powder and mixed with brown sugar is also beneficial in the treatment of this disease and the mixture should be taken in doses of 12 grams in the morning and evening. Another valuable remedy for cataract is to grind seven kernels of almonds and half a gram of pepper together in water, and then drink the mixture after sifting and sweetening the mixture with sugar candy. It helps the eyes to regain their vigor.

Simultaneous with the dietary treatment, the patient should adopt various methods of relaxing and strengthening the eyes. These include moving the eyes gently up and down, from side to side and in a circle, clock-wise and anti-clockwise; rotating the neck in circles and semi-circles and briskly moving the shoulders clock-wise and anti-clockwise. The patient should also resort to palming which is highly beneficial in removing strain and relaxing the eyes and its surrounding tissues. The procedure has been outlined in chapter 40 on defective vision.

The Epsom salt bath is highly beneficial and should be taken twice a week. The patient should remain in the bath from 25 to 35 minutes till he perspires freely. After the bath the patient should cool off gradually. Closed eyes should also be bathed at least twice daily with hot water containing Epsom salt - a tablespoonful of salt to a large cupful of hot water.

In cases where the cataract has been caused by stress, an anti-stress diet rich in protein, vitamin B,C, E, pantothenic acid and nutrients is essential to overcome the trouble. If a cataract has already developed, the diet will help prevent its occurrence in the other type. Fresh air and gentle outdoor exercises, such as walking, are other essentials to the treatment. Exposure to heat and bright light should be avoided as far as possible.

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Reference

Shri H.K. Bakhru. (1999). Natures Cure.

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