

Cataract surgery lessens patients' dizziness

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Older people with visual impairment can report feeling dizzy and falling. A new study found that after routine cataract surgery, the improved vision led to patients experiencing significantly less dizziness, although they did not experience fewer falls.

"Dizziness is caused by lots of factors, but the results indicate that cataract surgery removes symptoms of dizziness for some people, so it is an important intervention to consider," said Professor David Elliott, senior author of the *Ophthalmic & Physiological Optics* study.

Switching to multifocal glasses after cataract surgery may be the reason that cataract surgery did not decrease rates of falling as much as might be expected. "Multifocals are very convenient, but the results of the study suggest that older, frail [patients](#)—who are at greater risk of falling—shouldn't wear multifocals after cataract surgery if possible," said Professor Elliott.

The worst case scenario seems to be those people who wear multifocals before surgery in the first eye, then don't wear glasses until after surgery in the second eye, when they get multifocals again. "That seems to be too much change, and these people would be better wearing the multifocals throughout and not swapping back and forth," Professor Elliott advised.

More information: Elvira Supuk et al. Dizziness, but not falls rate, improves after routine cataract surgery: the role of refractive and spectacle changes, *Ophthalmic and Physiological Optics* (2015). [DOI: 10.1111/opo.12243](https://doi.org/10.1111/opo.12243)

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