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|  <div>한국소비자원<br/>Korea Consumer Agency</div> |  | <h1>Press Release</h1> <p>"An agency for the citizens in interest of consumers"</p> |   |  <a href="#">Facebook @kcanews</a><br> <a href="#">Instagram @kca.go.kr</a> |  |
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## Easy on cataract surgery, prone to side effects

### -Significant likelihood of visual impairment if having underlying diseases-

Cataract is a common ophthalmologic disease among the elderly, and consumers often take cataract surgeries as a minor procedure, hence easy on decisions to undergo a cataract surgery\*. However, consumers should take notice of continued reports on post-cataract surgery side effects.

\* Cataract surgeries performed by year: 518,663 (2016) → 549,471 (2017) → 592,191 (2018)  
 (National Health Insurance Corporation, 2018 Main Surgery Statistical Yearbook.)

### □ Cataract surgeries are no. 1 source of consumer redress requests related to ophthalmology

The Korea Consumer Agency (President Lee Hee Sook) received 84 consumer redress requests related to ophthalmology in the past three years (2017-2019). A majority of them were about cataract, 40 cases (47.6%), followed by retinal diseases (16 cases, 19.0%), visual correction (9 cases, 10.7%), and glaucoma (6 cases, 7.1%).

Of the 40 consumer redress requests related to cataract surgeries, the absolute majority (38 cases, 95.0%) was about post-operation side effects, and the remaining two being about examination fee refunds. Age-wise, 26 petitioners were over 60 years old (65.0%). Complaints were filed against clinics (20 cases, 50.0%), general hospitals (8 cases, 20.0%), and hospitals and Tertiary General Hospitals (6 cases, or 15%, respectively).

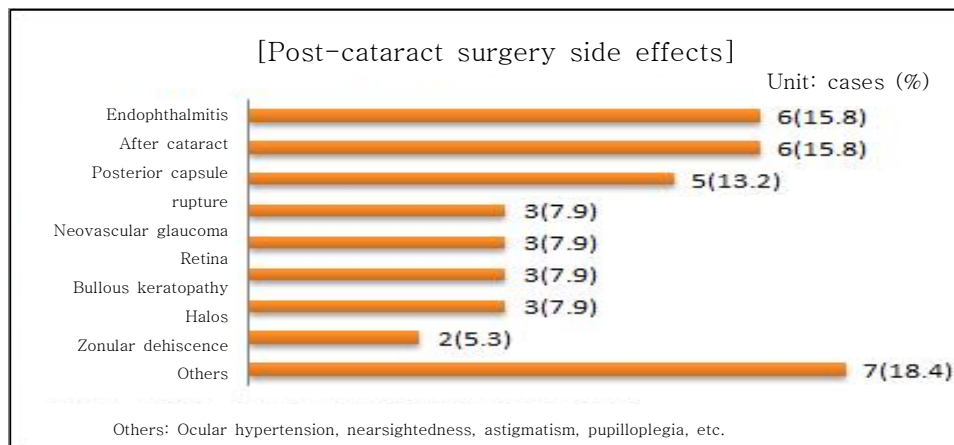
Of the 38 complaints about post-cataract surgery side effects, the most

common complaints were about endophthalmitis and after cataract (6 cases, or 15.8%, respectively), followed by posterior capsule rupture (5 cases, 13.2%), and neovascular glaucoma (3 cases, 7.9%).

※ Endophthalmitis: Inflammation in the eyeball caused by exogenic or intrinsic spread of infectious microorganisms.

After cataract: Cloudy lens capsule after cataract surgery.

Posterior capsule rupture: Rupture in the capsule behind the lens.



☐ **Patients with underlying diseases are more likely to experience visual impairment after cataract surgery**

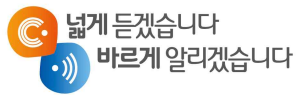
In 16 cases (42.1%) of the 38 complaints about post-cataract surgery side effects, patients did not recover their pre-surgery vision and ended up with visual impairment. Among them, 14 (87.5%) had internal diseases such as hypertension and diabetes or ophthalmologic diseases such as retinal abnormalities, suggesting that patients with underlying diseases should use extra care when making decisions on cataract surgery.

☐ **Read price tags and all other details before having multifocal intraocular lens surgery**

A cataract surgery would involve removing cloudy lens and replacing it with an artificial lens. A recent trend is inserting a multifocal intraocular lens with the aim to treat both cataract and gerontopia and resolve near/farsightedness. However, it is not covered by the national health insurance, hence more expensive examination fees and operation charges. There have been reports on side effects such as unfocused

vision, astigmatism, and halos. Of the 38 complaints related to post-cataract surgery side effects, eight (21.1%) were about multifocal intraocular lens. Examination fees and operation charges for both eyes would amount to as much as KRW 8 million.

To prevent consumer damages arising from cataract surgeries, the Korea Consumer Agency advised consumers to have their eyes tested in the right way and ask for explanations about the necessity and urgency of the surgery, ask for sufficient information about the effects and side effects of the surgery before deciding, and have their eyes regularly checked and taken care of to prevent complications.



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※ The Korea Consumer Agency listens to citizens' opinions and suggestions related to the agency operations on its citizen suggestion system.

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