

PRESS RELEASE



TO: Editor in Charge
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For Immediate Release

**Photo Attached*



Cataracts: Serious But Treatable

(Wahiawa, Hawaii) June 14, 2017 – June is designated Cataract Awareness Month by the American Academy of Ophthalmology because over 24 million Americans suffer from this eye disease, according to Prevent Blindness America and the National Eye Institute. If left untreated, cataracts can lead to blindness.

A cataract occurs when the normally clear lens of the eye becomes cloudy and light for the retina to process images is blocked and distorted. Signs of cataracts include blurred vision, sensitivity to light, fading or yellowing of colors, poor night vision, sensitivity to glare and seeing a halo around bright lights.

“Although it’s a natural process of aging, there are some factors that can increase your risk of developing cataracts,” said Steven Rhee, D.O., corneal specialist at Hawaiian Eye Center. “Risk factors include: exposure to ultraviolet light, diet, smoking, diabetes, use of some steroid medications and serious eye injuries.”

Cataracts are a very serious health issue, but it is treatable. Cataract surgery is one of the most common operations performed in the U.S.; the process involves removing the eye’s clouded lens and replacing it with an artificial lens implant. With modern cataract surgery, patients can usually upgrade the procedure to include vision correction to reduce dependency on glasses and contact lenses for those with refractive errors. Very little pain or discomfort is reported and surgery is typically outpatient.

Currently, the most advanced technology to treat cataracts is "Laser Assisted Cataract Surgery" with femtosecond laser. This technology allows for the opportunity to enhance the outcome of surgeries and offers patients the ability to improve vision impairments.

“If you’re 40 and over, you should have a comprehensive dilated eye exam every two to three years from your eye care professional,” Dr. Rhee said. “If you’re 40 and over with other risk factors or 60 and over, you should get an eye exam once a year.”

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Preventative measures like a healthy diet and regular exercise can reduce your risk of forming cataracts. An early diagnosis can also help you protect your vision. Speak with your eye care professional.

Christopher Tortora, M.D., and Steven Rhee, D.O., are board-certified ophthalmologists at Hawaiian Eye Center. Dr. Tortora and Dr. Rhee also host "The Hawaiian Eye Show," a weekly informational radio program about healthy vision broadcast live every Saturday at 8 a.m. on KHVH 830 AM/rebroadcast at 9 p.m. on KHBZ 990 AM. Hawaiian Eye's dedicated doctors and support staff are committed to educating the public about the importance of preventative eye care. To learn more about a variety of eye health issues, please call 621-8448 or visit HawaiianEye.com and Facebook.com/HawaiianEyeCenter. "For over 40 years, life has never looked better."

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