

SETTING

Private Optometry Clinic

PATIENT

You are a 75-year-old retired driving instructor. You suspect you have a cataract in your right eye because you can hardly see anything out of it. You have stopped driving for now because your spouse complains that your driving has become dangerous. The optometrist has just examined your eye with a slit lamp.

TASK

- When asked, admit that you are not exactly sure what a cataract is. You have heard many people talk about them but all you know is that it is something that affects your vision.
- Find out what happens now.
- Say you don't really like the idea of surgery – you are concerned you will go totally blind.
- Find out what the surgery involves.
- Agree to be referred for surgery.

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OPTOMETRIST

A 75-year-old retired driving instructor suspects he/she has a cataract in his/her right eye. The patient's spouse has been complaining about the 'dangerous' way he/she drives. On examination of the eye, you can see that it is almost completely opaque, so you confirm his/her self-diagnosis of a cataract.

TASK

- Give findings of your slit lamp examination (presence of a cataract). Find out what the patient knows about his/her condition.
- Give information about a cataract (i.e., clouding that develops in the crystalline lens of the eye, causing a reduction in light reaching the retina, etc.).
- Explain next steps (referral to an ophthalmologist for surgery, discussion about treatment, etc.).
- Reassure the patient about the surgery (outpatient, low risk, high success rate, etc.).
- Briefly outline what the cataract surgery involves (e.g., incision, removal of cloudy lens, replacement with new clear plastic lens, etc.). Establish the patient's willingness to be referred for surgery.