**Remove the section in red.**

**Add your letterhead to the first page of the consent form**

**Keep each section together on the same page: move it as needed.**

**Change font size for large print.**

**Version 7/1/15**

**There are four parts to the plain-language cataract consent forms:**

* Use this main cataract consent form for all patients having cataract surgery.
* Add an addendum if needed:
  + Astigmatism correction: use for toric IOL and relaxing incisions [www.omic.com/astigmatism-correction/](http://www.omic.com/astigmatism-correction/)
  + Presbyopia correction: use for presbyopia-correcting IOLs and monovision [www.omic.com/presbyopia-correction/](http://www.omic.com/presbyopia-correction/)
  + Laser-assisted cataract surgery: use for laser-assisted cataract surgery or laser relaxing incisions [www.omic.com/laser-assisted-cataract-surgery/](http://www.omic.com/laser-assisted-cataract-surgery/)
* You may want to create forms for astigmatism, presbyopia, or laser-assisted surgery that contain both the main consent form and the appropriate addendum.

**These are sample consent forms.** OMIC policyholders are not required to use them. Be sure to review them and modify them to suit your actual practice.

**This consent form is written using “plain language” principles.**

The goal is to make the document easy for your patients to understand. Patients facing cataract surgery are asked to make a number of decisions, including whether to have a premium IOL, how to correct astigmatism and presbyopia, and if they want laser-assisted cataract surgery. Many patients are not suitable candidates for these options, or do not have the resources to pay the additional fees for them. We did not want patients to feel confused or overwhelmed by information about procedures they may not have. For that reason, we limited the information in our basic cataract consent form. It is for patients who will have a monofocal IOL and wear glasses to correct astigmatism or presbyopia. We developed “plain language” additions to address other options.

**This document does not contain all the information patients needs to know about cataract surgery options.** Instead, it contains brief, basic information about key aspects of cataract surgery. For example, the presbyopia addendum explains presbyopia and lists monovision and premium IOLs as the two options to treat it. It does not describe the difference between the types of presbyopia-correcting IOLs. The astigmatism consent offers a toric IOL or a relaxing incision, but does not distinguish between manual limbal relaxing incisions or arcuate incisions created with the femtosecond laser. You and your staff will, therefore, need to educate your patients before asking them to sign the consent. Provide enough information so that they can make decisions about the various options you offer. Consider providing educational materials, such as the AAO’s pamphlets, as well as brochures from the manufacturer of the premium IOL. Document your educational efforts.

**Decide what is best for your patient population.** We field tested these forms. Most patients found them easier to understand than our prior sample cataract forms, and felt less confused about the many options. A few patients preferred detailed forms with more technical information. You know your patients best, and can decide which type of form works best for your practice. You may decide to keep using your current cataract consent form.

**Ophthalmologists in Florida** **should continue to use the cataract consent form approved by the Florida state board of medicine**. Use of the Florida form helps defend eye surgeons from allegations of lack of informed consent. Just as importantly, no report to the Medical Board is required if the patient experiences complications listed in this state-specific form. <http://www.omic.com/cataract-consent-form-fl-specific/>.

Cataract Surgery with IOL (Intraocular Lens)

**A cataract** happens when the lens in your eye becomes cloudy and hard. The lens is the clear part of your eye that helps focus images. Cataracts can cause problems such as blurry or dulled vision, sensitivity to light and glare, and seeing shadows or ghost-like images.

**A cataract will get worse if not removed.** Surgery is the only way to do so. It is your choice when to have cataract surgery. Most people wait until their vision problems interfere with daily life. You can instead decide not to have your cataract removed.

**During cataract surgery, an eye surgeon will remove the cloudy lens.** He or she will replace it with an “IOL” (intraocular lens, a clear plastic artificial lens). The most common is a “monofocal” (one focus) IOL. This helps improve vision at mostly just one distance, either near or far. You will probably need glasses to see clearly at other distances.

**Cataract surgery only corrects vision problems caused by cataracts.** This surgery cannot correct vision problems caused by glaucoma, diabetes, age-related macular degeneration, or other eye illnesses or injuries.

**Many patients with cataracts also have astigmatism or presbyopia** (eye problems that make it hard to see).

* **Astigmatism** causes blurry vision. Normally, eyes are round (like a baseball). With astigmatism, the eye is long (like a football).
* **Presbyopia** makes it hard for the eye to focus on near vision. Most people get this as they age. People at any age who have cataract surgery with a monofocal IOL focused for distance vision will have some presbyopia. People with presbyopia might hold a book or menu at arm’s length to try to see it more clearly.

Glasses help astigmatism and presbyopia. If you want to wear glasses less often, the eye surgeon can put in a special IOL or do an extra procedure during cataract surgery to treat these eye problems.

**You have to pay extra for special IOLs or extra surgical procedures.** Medicare and private insurance do not pay for these. Your eye surgeon will let you know if you have astigmatism or presbyopia. Your eye surgeon will give you more information if you are interested in these treatments. You will be asked to sign another consent for them.

**Cataract surgery is usually safe and successful. As with all surgery, there are risks (problems that can happen) with cataract surgery.** While the eye surgeon cannot tell you about every risk, here are some of the common or serious risks:

* **Risks from cataract surgery** include vision loss, blindness, or not getting the result you want. You could also have bleeding, infection, a droopy eyelid, or glaucoma (high eye pressure). You could get a detached retina. This is when the retina, at the back of the eye, pulls away from where it is attached. You may need surgery to fix the detached retina). Your eye may be injured by surgery or anesthesia. You may need another surgery later to take out pieces of the cataract that were not removed during the cataract surgery.
* Risks from an IOL. The IOL may be too weak or too strong. The eye surgeon might not be able to insert the IOL of your choice. The eye surgeon may need to replace or reposition your IOL months or years after surgery.
* Problems during surgery that need immediate treatment. Your surgeon may need to do more surgery right away or change your surgery to treat this new problem.
* Anesthesia can cause heart and breathing problems. Very rarely, it can cause death. Anesthesia can also injure your eye and cause vision loss or double vision.
* Other risks. There is no guarantee that cataract surgery will improve your vision. It is possible that cataract surgery or anesthesia may make your vision worse, cause blindness, or even the loss of an eye. These problems can appear weeks, months, or even years after surgery.
* You may need to wear glasses after cataract surgery.

**Consent**. By signing below, you consent (agree) that:

* You read this informed consent form, or someone read it to you.
* You understand the information in this informed consent form.
* The eye surgeon or staff offered you a copy of this informed consent form.
* The eye surgeon or staff answered your questions about cataract surgery.
* Your eye surgeon or staff have discussed presbyopia following cataract surgery and ways to treat it.
* If you have astigmatism, the eye surgeon or staff discussed ways to treat it.
* You understand that you may need to wear glasses after surgery.

**I consent to have cataract surgery with an IOL (intraocular lens) in my \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (state “right” or “left”) eye.**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Patient (or person authorized to sign for the patient) Date