

Lens is welcome sight for sore eyes

by **Pippa Woolnough**

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A MOTHER can see clearly for the first Christmas in nearly 40 years after undergoing a revolutionary procedure to treat cataracts.

Anne Ivorson, of Portland Road, has had sight problems since the age of 16 but her vision deteriorated to the extent that she could not drive at night.

The mother-of-three, 54, said: "It was difficult driving at night and with the glare. By April this year it had become increasingly worse, so I had to stop.

"My vision was becoming increasingly affected by blurriness and glare. I found I could not really see.

"I was putting on sunglasses much more of the time and I did not feel happy even just walking down the road.

"I was dismayed that it was no longer possible to correct my vision just by being given stronger glasses," she said.

Rather than having her cataracts removed, which would still leave her needing glasses for reading, she opted for a new version of treatment, which involved implanting an artificial lens.

Raman Malhotra, consultant ophthalmologist at Queen Victoria Hospital, to whom Anne was referred, said the procedure was safe and effective but the difficulty was reproducing the behaviour of a natural lens within a synthetic version.

Previously, the procedure was suited for patients with far-distance vision problems but they were still required to wear glasses for near-vision. Now the special lens – called ReSTOR – deals with long and short distances in tandem.

The procedure is said to be



I can see clearly now: Anne Ivorson is able to read without glasses

Photo No: 13570/01
by Stuart Douglas

particularly suited to Mrs Ivorson, who is a keen reader and has no problem with her near-vision.

Mr Malhotra said: "Had Anne undergone traditional treatment, it is extremely likely she would now need glasses for reading.

THE FACTS

● A 2.5mm micro-incision is made at the edge of the cornea. A tiny probe is inserted into the eye and the lens, gently broken down by ultrasound, is removed.

The ReSTOR lens is made to a patient's personal prescription, then folded and inserted through the tiny incision. Once in place, the lens unfolds into the correct position.

As the incision is so small, stitches are rarely needed. Patients can go home the same day.

– Raman Malhotra

● The procedure costs about £2,000 each eye and is not available on the NHS.

● To find out more, call 0800 0924567.

The ReSTOR, however, allows high quality near and distance vision and as a result is revolutionising the treatment of cataracts."

Mrs Ivorson, who has lived in East Grinstead for nearly 20 years, underwent surgery on her first eye at the BUPA Gatwick Park Hospital in September and her second one in November.

The operation takes about 15 minutes for each eye and can be performed under local or general anaesthetic.

She said: "I could tell even that night after having the first eye treated that I could see far better. Certainly, the next day I said to people, 'it's like the windows have been cleaned', because my vision was much brighter."

"I'm just so happy I that I can see clearly and read without spectacles," Mrs Ivorson added.