

Complex cataract surgery brings 'world' back to Biloxi woman

For 60 years, Judith Monto thought good vision could never be part of her life. "When I took my glasses off, the whole world would disappear," she said.

Now, at age 71, she has nearly perfect vision - without glasses - for the first time since fourth grade. "I'm just so amazed because I've not been able to go without my glasses before. They were just part of me," the retired school teacher said in her Biloxi home.

Monto has spent a lifetime with high myopia (extreme nearsightedness) and severe astigmatism. She also developed glaucoma in recent years, making solutions more complicated, said Dr. Rainna Bahadur, an ophthalmologist and partner at Eye Associates of the South - which has clinics in Biloxi, Ocean Springs and Gulfport.

"Dr. Bahadur really made

wise decisions for me," Monto said of her treatment plan leading up to cataract surgery with lens implants performed by Bahadur. "I can't say enough about her. She is amazing."

A cataract causes the natural lens in the eye to become progressively opaque, impairing vision. Lens implants replace the eye's natural lenses and correct vision problems, which otherwise would require eyeglasses or contact lenses.

Monto said Bahadur had warned her a few years ago that she would need cataract surgery soon. Monto also knew it was time when she realized she had worn clothes that don't match and colored the sky green on an illustration for a children's sermon at church. "I'd have to carry my clothes out into the bright sunlight to see colors," Monto recalled. "I had trouble distin-

guishing facial features across a room. When I would read or do any tasks at night, I'd have every light on in the house."

Cataract surgery usually is performed with a topical anesthetic (eye drops) or local anesthesia. But due to Monto's complex vision problems, she received light, general anesthesia to keep her comfortable. "I always plan the treatment course carefully to help ensure best results," Bahadur said. "I keep patients informed and part of decision making."

Since Monto is a "high myope," she is at high risk for detached retina during surgery. To minimize that risk, Dr. Joel Knight performed a pre-op laser procedure to bond her retinas her eye walls. Knight also is an ophthalmologist and partner at Eye Associates of the South.

Another complication was



Judith Monto

that Monto's eyes did not respond to dilating eye drops (mydriatics), so Bahadur had to dilate her eyes manually.

An advanced technology toric lens implant was chosen to correct Monto's severe astigmatism and high myopia.

"I am absolutely delighted," said Monto, who only must wear glasses for reading now.

For more information, call Eye Associates of the South at (228) 396-5185 or visit 2020view.com.