Cataract surgery and diving

In the event of a cataract surgery, how long after the procedure is it possible to go diving again?

Answer from DAN experts:

In Italy, at present, the most commonly used technique for a cataract surgery is phacoemulsification with artificial crystalline lens implantation. The cataract is removed through a tiny hole of about 2-3 millimeters, and usually without stitches. The reason that it is not possible to dive in the days immediately following the surgery is that if water, which often carries microorganisms or pathogens, enters through the unstitched wound it could cause very serious intraocular infections (Endophthalmitis). If the wound is only 2-3 mm wide though, it will heal quickly, and after about a month it will be possible to safely go diving again, provided that barotraumas such as a "mask squeeze", which occurs when a diver fails to equalize the mask, are avoided, since they could reopen the surgical wound. In any case, it is necessary to ask your surgeon's permission, based on the technique used and the size of the surgical wound. The bigger the diameter of the wound, the longer it will take for it to heal. If during the surgery stitches are given, these, if they come in contact with water, could favor an infection inside the tissue where the thread is, which could extend inside the eye. It is advisable to wait for the stitches to be removed in order to avoid any risks of infection. Any possible complications during or after the surgery could also prolong the healing period of the wound, so ultimately, it will be the surgeon's duty to acknowledge remission.