Frequently Asked Questions About LASIK Surgery

How do I know if I am a good candidate for LASIK Eye Surgery?

A large percentage of nearsighted, farsighted, and astigmatic patients are potential candidates for LASIK. Patients who are 21 years of age or older, have healthy eyes that are free from retinal problems, corneal scars, and any eye disease are suitable. Along with being medically suitable, the best candidates are people with a lifestyle or occupation in which they are dissatisfied with their contact lenses or glasses. When you have a comprehensive eye examination, the doctor will be able to determine if you are a good candidate.

How Long Does LASIK Take?

LASIK is performed as an Out-patient procedure in the comfort and convenience of an excimer laser eye surgery suite (TLC Laser Center in Encino). The entire treatment takes about 5 to 7 minutes per eye, or approximately 15 minutes for both eyes.

Is the Effect of LASIK Eye Surgery Permanent?

Yes. Following an initial healing period of two to three months, the effect of the treatment is usually lifelong. Rarely the result can “drift”. The result can be “touched-up” if necessary.

Will I Need Reading Glasses After the Treatment?

Generally, patients under 40 years of age read well without glasses following the treatment. Patients over 40 may need magnification for reading fine print. Presbyopia is the term that refers to the natural weakening of the focusing muscles that occurs in our early to mid 40s, causing us to need the magnification that reading glasses provide. The LASIK treatment does not correct or prevent presbyopia. We also will be glad to discuss another option called monovision.

How Many Times Do I Need To be Seen Following the Treatment?

Most patients are usually seen the day following the treatment and then and week and at least 1 month and 3 months following the treatment. Some patients require more visits. Remember, we are available 24 hours a day when you have any questions, concerns or need attention.
How Soon After The Treatment Can I Bathe or Take a Shower?

Typically you can bathe the same day as the treatment. Avoid getting soap or water directly into your eyes for the first week. Avoid rubbing your eyes during the first month after surgery.

When Can I Drive After The Treatment?

You should not drive the day of treatment. After that, you may drive when you feel confident that your visual acuity and eye comfort allow you to drive safely. Most patients can see well enough to drive themselves to their first appointment the next day. However, you should have a back up driver available in case your vision is still blurry.

How Soon Can I Use Eye Makeup?

You may resume wearing eye makeup starting 1-2 weeks after your treatment. We strongly recommend that you purchase new eye makeup, specifically mascara, to avoid potential infection following your treatment.

How Soon After The Treatment Can I Exercise?

Non-contact sports can be resumed as soon as you feel capable. Eye protection is always recommended for racquet sports or rough sports where there is a risk of being hit in the eye.

How Soon Can I Swim?

You should stay out of swimming pools for one week after your treatment, and rivers, lakes and oceans for two weeks following your treatment. Avoid high speed water sports (skiing, wake-boarding, etc) for one month.

What Kind of Anesthesia is Used During the Treatment?

Numbing eye drops are used. Sometimes an oral medication is used to help with relaxation. Don't worry -no needles or intravenous drugs are used.

Can you Have Both Eyes Treated at the Same Time?

Treatment can usually be performed on both eyes on the same day. This decreases the troublesome effect of being nearsighted in only one eye between the two treatments. You may elect to have one eye done at a time.

Does LASIK hurt?

The treatment itself is painless because we put a few numbing drops in your eyes to make you even more comfortable. You will feel pressure on and around the eye during treatment. With LASIK, some patients may experience a feeling of "something in the eye" for a day or so after treatment.

Can I See the Treatment as it is Being Performed?

You will be "awake" but very relaxed. You will not be able to see any of the details of the treatment. You will see a number of lights, but the images will be blurred.
Will I Experience Pain after The Treatment?

Some patients experience a feeling of burning or scratchiness. This feeling generally lasts from one to three hours following the treatment. Most people feel fine if they can take a nap soon after the treatment.

How Soon After Surgery Will I See Well?

Each patient is different. The eye drop medications cause some blurring, but most patients notice a dramatic improvement even as they leave the office.

Will My Eyes be Patched?

No, but clear, protective eye shields will be placed over your treated eye(s) following the treatment, and will be removed in our office the next morning. You will continue to wear these eye shields at bedtime for 1 week for protection.

When Can I Go Back To Work?

Most patients are back to work full-time the day after treatment. An additional day or two is rarely required before returning to work. If you can, we recommend that you take it easy for a couple of days.

Will I Need Glasses or Contact Lenses After The Treatment?

The goal of refractive surgery is to reduce your dependence on glasses and/or contact lenses, but LASIK patients still may benefit from reading glasses or distance glasses when they desire perfect near or distance vision. A small percentage of patients wear a thin pair of prescription glasses for night driving.

Should I have a Custom LASIK Eye Surgery Treatment or a Conventional Treatment?

The best treatment for you depends on the measurements we take from the Aberrometer and your other clinical measurements and vision complaints. This will indicate the presence and severity of aberrations, or distortions, which will necessitate a Custom Laser Eye Surgery treatment. You may have specific complaints that are related to the optical aberrations that are not corrected by your current glasses or contact lenses. Finally, Custom Laser Eye Surgery is usually indicated for anyone who has had previous corneal surgery.

Why should I have Custom LASIK Eye Surgery when conventional Lasik Eye Surgery worked fine for my friends?

Conventional Lasik Eye Surgery has provided excellent results for literally millions of people. However, if you are a patient who has unusual aberrations not readily corrected by conventional Lasik Eye Surgery, customized laser eye surgery is the best choice for you. The best thing to do is to come in for a Complimentary Consultation and together, the LASIK surgeon and you, can determine which treatment option is necessary and best suited for your individual needs.
What is the real difference between conventional Laser Eye Surgery and Custom LASIK Eye Surgery?

Conventional Laser Eye Surgery treats the vast majority of common optical aberrations called "lower order" aberrations. These are responsible for causing nearsightedness, farsightedness and astigmatism. Custom LASIK Eye Surgery provides a more precise treatment for patients who have "higher order" aberrations, which we can now measure with the Aberrometer. For these patients, customized laser eye surgery may provide a better quality of vision by measuring and addressing all of these aberrations as part of the treatment plan.

Why is Custom LASIK sometimes more expensive?

Custom LASIK represents the addition of advanced technology to conventional Lasik Eye Surgery and may provide a better quality of vision. Our practice has incorporated the advanced measurement technology, the Aberrometer measurement system, and the Custom LASIK Laser Eye Surgery software necessary to provide these treatments. This advanced technology adds a modest cost but may deliver the best vision quality.

How Much Does Laser Vision Correction Cost? Can I Afford It?

Our Refractive Surgery Coordinator will provide you with complete information on the costs. The coordinator can also discuss payment options with you.

Your Company May Be Able To Help You Pay for LASIK!

Many companies have implemented healthcare options that make elective surgeries such as LASIK an affordable alternative. These insurance programs are referred to as Flex Plans, cafeteria plans or alternative health plans. These plans designate a limited amount of pre tax dollars to pay for the employees predetermined elective surgery. Generally the employee must decide which surgery they are planning to have and declare this to their employer. You can contact your human resource office to find out when your company's enrollment period begins.