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# REFRACTIVE SURGERY

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The Refractive Surgical procedures performed involve the cornea. Keratorefractive (corneal) procedures are classified as either incisional, laser ablative or lamellar.

Dr. Mary Beth McAteer is an expert in the field and will advise you at the time of your initial visit if she feels you are a good candidate for refractive surgery.

## LASER VISION CORRECTION FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### What is laser vision correction?

Laser vision correction is a precise method of gently reshaping the cornea. A specially trained ophthalmologist uses a computerized excimer laser to remove a thin layer of tissue from the cornea. This reshapes the cornea to the desired correction so the eye can focus properly.

### What are the most advanced laser vision correction procedures called?

- Custom LASIK
- LASIK (Laser Assisted In Situ Keratomileusis)
- PRK (Photorefractive Keratectomy) or LASEK (Laser Epithelial Keratomileusis)

### Who is considered to be a good candidate?

Patients who:

- Have a stable prescription for at least one year
- Are nearsighted (myopic)
- Are farsighted (hyperopic)
- Have astigmatism
- Are 18 years of age or older
- Have good eye health

### What are the results?

In U.S. Clinical trials:

- 100% of treated patients had improved natural or uncorrected vision.
- 98% of treated patients could see 20/40 or better, which is good enough to pass a driving test in most states.
- 80% of treated patients could see 20/20 or better.

Custom LASIK had even better statistical outcomes in select treatment ranges.

# REFRACTIVE SURGERY (Continued)

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## How safe is laser vision correction?

In U.S. clinical trials:

- 100% of treated patients had improved natural or uncorrected vision.
- No sight threatening complications occurred.

## Can I have one eye treated at a time?

Although more than 90% of patients have both eyes treated at the same time, they can choose to have one eye treated at a time.

## Does the procedure hurt?

Laser vision correction procedures are usually painless. The use of topical anesthesia eye drops numbs the eye. Occasionally, some patients experience slight discomfort a few hours after the procedure. Post-operative discomfort may include slight stinging, excessive tearing and a foreign body sensation. Typically, over-the-counter pain relievers ease this discomfort. A post-operative nap is also recommended to ease discomfort.

## What if I accidentally blink during the procedure?

It is not possible for patients to blink during a procedure. An instrument is used to gently hold the eyelids open. Because eye drops have already numbed the eye, the reflex that gives you the desire to blink is lost, so keeping the eye open is painless.

## How is the flap created during LASIK?

The microkeratome is the machine that creates the flap for LASIK. Firstly, this machine creates suction against the eye, which holds the machine in the correct position and firms the eye for a precise cut. Then the surgeon engages the machine, allowing it to cut a smooth flap in the cornea.

## What is involved in the treatment?

The procedure from start to finish takes approximately 15-30 minutes and it includes:

- 1) Anesthetic drops are placed in the eye;
- 2) Lid retainer is used to prevent blinking;
- 3) Patient lies on the reclining chair and is positioned under the microscope of the laser;
- 4) Microkeratome is used to create the flap in the cornea;
- 5) Patient may feel slight pressure on the eye;
- 6) Patient may see 15-30 seconds of darkness;
- 7) Patient focuses on a flashing light above them;
- 8) Surgeon monitors position of the eye throughout treatment;
- 9) Laser is on for 15-60 seconds for treatment depending on the patient's level of correction; and
- 10) Patient goes home following treatment.

## **REFRACTIVE SURGERY (Continued)**

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### **Will I be able to throw away my glasses or contact lenses?**

The goal of LASIK is to make patients less dependent on their glasses or contact lenses. In the U.S. clinical trials:

- 98% of treated patients were 20/40 or better, which is good enough to pass the driving test in most states.
- After the treatment, more than 85% of treated patients used glasses or contacts less than 10% of the time.

### **How soon can I resume normal activities?**

Most patients are able to drive and resume normal activities the next day. Patients should not wear eye makeup, swim, get water in their eyes, or expose themselves to dusty or dirty environments for at least four days after surgery. In addition, patients should not rub their eyes for at least four days after surgery.

### **Are the results of the procedure permanent?**

Patients can expect their results to remain stable for the rest of their lives once their eyes have stabilized after the procedure.

### **Does insurance cover the procedure?**

Most insurance plans do not cover the procedure at this time. Be sure to call and check with your insurance carrier because some insurers have begun to cover it.

### **Can I talk to patients who have had the procedure?**

Yes, in fact we encourage you to speak to a patient who had a similar level of correction as you before they had the procedure. We also encourage you to visit other laser vision correction centers to see what they have to offer. We are that confident that you will return to us to have the procedure.