



Learn More About Laser Eye Surgery: Risks and Benefits

Description

LASIK surgery, or laser eye surgery, can address various vision problems. However, there are potential adverse effects, and the surgery is unsuitable for everyone. Depending on where a person lives, the surgery can also be expensive.



The cornea is the outer layer of the eye. Some people's corneas can alter their shape, resulting in vision problems such as astigmatism and myopia. This layer is reshaped using laser eye surgery, a medical operation.

The particular manner in which laser eye surgery reshapes the cornea is dictated by the vision problem being treated. Laser eye surgery can correct vision problems like nearsightedness and farsightedness.

The surgery is brief, and patients remain conscious throughout. It is also ordinarily painless; if a person suffers discomfort, it usually implies that complications have occurred. This page explains what laser eye surgery is, who it can assist, how much it costs, how long it takes to recover, and any short- and long-term dangers.

What exactly is laser eye surgery? (LASIK or PRK)

LASIK is the most prevalent type of refractive eye surgery for laser-assisted in situ keratomileusis. LASIK was first patented in 1989 and has become the most popular therapy for refractive eye problems. Lasers are used to sculpt the cornea during the process.

Who could it benefit?

Over 150 million Americans use corrective eyewear, such as glasses or contact lenses, to compensate for refractive defects, according to the American Academy of Ophthalmology. Refractive errors arise when the eye fails to bend – or refract – light to properly focus on the retina at the back of the eye. This is mainly due to the cornea's shape.

Farsightedness

Hyperopia is the medical term for farsightedness. People with this condition can see items in the distance clearly, while close objects can appear hazy. Farsightedness is caused by the cornea's curve being too flat. This can be corrected with laser eye surgery by reshaping the cornea to have a steeper curvature.

Nearsightedness

Nearsightedness, often known as myopia or short-sightedness, is the ability to clearly perceive objects in close proximity. Distant things, on the other hand, may appear blurry. This is because the cornea's curvature is too steep. By reshaping the cornea, healthcare practitioners can rectify this through laser eye surgery.

Astigmatism

The presence of a misshaped eye distinguishes astigmatism. Without the condition, the eye is round, like a soccer ball. However, those with astigmatism may have a more football-like shape. In some circumstances, laser eye surgery can rectify this uneven curvature of the cornea.

Who is inappropriate?

Unsuitable individuals – Candidates for laser eye surgery from Trusted Source include individuals who:

- They have had their eye prescription changed in the recent 12 months.
- They use medications that may cause vision changes
- In their 20s or younger, while some experts advise not being under 18 years
- Having thin corneas, which may not be stable following laser surgery.
- Are pregnant or breastfeeding

Benefits

The most significant advantage of laser eye surgery is that most people no longer need to wear corrective lenses to see clearly. Individuals may choose to have the surgery done for a variety of reasons, including:

- Being unable to wear contact lenses but preferring not to wear glasses, sometimes for cosmetic
- Reasons wanting to participate in activities that require a person not to wear glasses or contact lenses
- Enjoying the convenience of not having to wear corrective eyeglasses

Complications and risks

- A person is more vulnerable if they have the following:
- eye infections, such as keratitis or ocular herpes
- Significant cataracts
- big pupils
- glaucoma
- Keratoconus is a disorder that causes the cornea to thin and become unstable over time.

A person may encounter complications, like with any surgery, such as:

Dry eyes: Up to 95% of persons who have laser eye surgery may develop dry eyes as a result of the procedure, in which the eyes produce fewer tears. This symptom can be alleviated by using lubricating eye drops.

Glare or halo: Approximately 20% of persons who have laser eye surgery may develop visual abnormalities such as glare, halo, or light sensitivity.

Double or hazy vision: Up to one in every fifty persons may experience blurriness and the sensation that something is in their eyes. The reason could be diffuse lamellar keratitis, popularly known as “Sands of Sahara” syndrome.

Other problems that a person may face include:

- Infection of the eye
- corneal flap complication
- Whites of the eyes that are crimson or bloodshot

Most symptoms should go away after a few days, so anyone still suffering symptoms after that period should see a doctor.

What to anticipate during surgery

According to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), laser eye surgery typically takes less than 30

minutes. Others predict that the process will take approximately 5 minutes per eye.

People who have laser eye surgery should be prepared for the following:

- They will recline in a chair, so they are flat on their back beneath a laser instrument and computer screen.
- The surgical team will clean the area around the eye and administer numbing drops.
- To keep the eyelids open, surgeons will use a lid speculum, a medical device.
- A laser will create a flap in the cornea, which the surgeon will lift open.
- People will need to stare at a light to keep their eyes motionless while the laser works.
- The laser will then restructure the cornea's surface.

The surgeon will next reposition the flap and put a shield to protect the eye.

Rest period

According to the FDA, a person may experience burning, itching, or the presence of a foreign object in their eye after surgery. To alleviate these symptoms, the surgeon may prescribe a fair pain treatment, such as acetaminophen.

Because there will be no stitches holding the flap in place, surgeons will equip clients with an eye shield to safeguard their eyes. The guard prevents touching the eye or applying pressure accidentally, such as during sleeping.

Individuals will typically take a few days off work to recover. They should make an appointment with their eye doctor within 24-48 hours of surgery to examine their eyes. The doctor will ensure that the eyes heal properly. Following this, a person will require multiple additional appointments over the next six months.

Results

It may take up to 6 months after laser eye surgery for a person's vision to stabilize. They may notice that their eyesight fluctuates following the treatment, but this is not causing alarm. However, it is usual for vision to fluctuate for the first few months after surgery.

Furthermore, laser eye surgery may inadvertently over- or under-correct a person's vision. This may necessitate additional surgery to correct, which healthcare experts call augmentation. It's also worth noting that corrected vision can deteriorate years after the treatment.

Cost

The cost of LASIK surgery varies based on where the patient resides. Other surgeons may use different equipment or techniques, which may affect the pricing.

LASIK is frequently classified as an elective or cosmetic procedure by health insurance companies and is not typically covered. The American Refractive Surgery Council anticipated that LASIK surgery

would cost around \$4,200 per eye in 2020.

Although laser eye surgery can be costly, consumers must conduct extensive research before receiving therapy at a lower cost. There could be a rationale for the cheap pricing, which could increase the risk of consequences.

Summary

Some people may benefit from laser eye surgery to improve their vision. However, while these enhancements may endure for a few years, they are rarely permanent. It is a short but often costly operation that most health insurance policies do not cover. It's also worth noting that this operation may not correct presbyopia or the reading glasses requirement as people age. People should talk to their eye doctor about if laser eye surgery is right for them.

Category

1. Lifestyle

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Author

tcanoah

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