

Frequently Asked Questions about Vision Correction

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Why should I choose Melbourne Eye Centre?

Most Lasik centres are corporate owned and often have big advertising budgets. They are reliant on large volumes of patients which increases the risk that they may cut corners and often pressure you to proceed. We are an independent, privately owned and more concerned with excellent outcomes and happy patients. We have performed thousands of eye procedures and have many happy patients.

Why do you wear glasses?

Not everyone is suitable for vision correction for a variety of reasons. I am not suitable. In addition, my being short sighted allows me to see up very close which is very helpful to me when performing surgery

What is the difference between PRK and LASIK?

answer:LASIK is essentially a two stage procedure. In the first step a thin corneal flap is created with a laser and in the second step the excimer laser sculpts the cornea. The flap is repositioned at the end of the procedure. Prior to this method, flaps were cut with a blade, a technique which is still in common use by many centres. At Melbourne Eye Centre we exclusively use the laser technique known as INTRALASE as it is the state of the art. The corneal flap begins to adhere within a minute or two. After LASIK, your vision will improve within the first 24 hours. In the PRK procedure there is no flap created, instead a thin layer of corneal tissue is removed with an alcohol solution and the laser is then used to re-sculpt the cornea. After the procedure the patient is fitted with a contact lens to improve comfort during healing. The bandage lens is usually removed within the first week, and the patient uses drops to increase comfort and promote healing. PRK usually takes longer for vision to improve sometimes taking several weeks for vision to stabilize. This is the main reason by LASIK has become more popular. Both produce excellent results and one is not better than the other. The choice often comes down to which is best suited to an individual which is based on measurements performed prior to the procedure.

What is Intralase?

The first step in laser surgery involves cutting a flap in the cornea using a blade. Intralase is new technology that uses a laser to create the flap without the use of a blade. As a laser is far more precise than a blade, the results are superior

What is iLasik and do you offer it?

iLasik is NOT a new or different technique. It is simply the combination of conventional Intralase with a particular brand of lasik laser called Customview. Thus it is it a bit of an advertising gimmick. The Lasik procedure with iLasik is NO different to Lasik with any other brand of laser

How do I know if I am a candidate?

The ideal candidate for laser vision correction is an individual at least 21 years of age or older and with otherwise healthy eyes. Your vision should also be relatively unchanged over the last year. People who are highly short sighted or far sighted may not be suitable for LASIK but may be suitable for other vision correction methods. People with certain medical conditions are not candidates for laser vision correction.

Can I have both eyes done the same day?

With the LASIK procedure, both eyes are typically done the same day. PRK heals more slowly and therefore you will have the option to have the second eye treated a few weeks later or that same day.

Is Laser vision correction safe? What are the risks involved?

LASIK has now been performed for over twenty years and is known to be safe. Millions of patients around the world have had LASIK or PRK performed. Seldom does a complication result in poor vision but as with every medical procedure, there are risks involved with Laser Vision Correction. You will receive a thorough explanation of all the risks and benefits involved with these procedures when you have your assessment.

How successful is Laser vision correction?

At Melbourne Eye Centre, 96% of patients are completely happy with the results from their initial surgery. As the eye is living and breathing tissue, it can change over time. This means that vision may need re-treatment with further laser either shortly after the initial procedure or even years later.

When will I be able to see?

Many patients can read the clock on the wall in the laser room immediately after LASIK. However, your vision will appear to be somewhat "steamy" for several hours following surgery. Your sight may fluctuate for a few weeks following your procedure, but will improve during that time. It's important that patients have realistic expectations. While not all patients undergoing LASIK gain 6/6 (20/20) vision, most see at least 6/12 (20/40) or better the day after the procedure. That qualifies an individual to pass a driver's license exam without wearing glasses or contact lenses.

Will I need to take time off work?

You should be able to return to work the next day, so there's little downtime. We may recommend that you take it easy for a few days depending on the work environment or type of life you lead, and will advise you during your consultation.

What are the restrictions following surgery?

Most patients can drive to work the next day. You should not wear eye makeup, or expose yourself to dusty or dirty environments for two days following surgery. You should not rub your eyes nor should you swim or hot tub for two weeks after surgery. Protective eyewear will be provided for you at night when you sleep to ensure you do not rub or scratch your eyes.

Can I have LASIK if I have astigmatism?

Yes. Astigmatism can be corrected whether you are nearsighted or farsighted.

What is astigmatism?

The front surface of an eye is called the cornea. In a "perfect" eye it would be round like a soccer ball. In an eye with astigmatism it is shaped like a football or like an egg, with one meridian being steeper than the other. This produces distorted and blurred images both up close and far away and is usually corrected with glasses.

What stops me from blinking or moving my eye during the laser treatment?

There is an instrument that holds your lids apart to prevent blinking. You will be looking at target light during the procedure. The laser itself has an eye tracker which checks the the position of your eye about 4,000 times per second, much faster than you can move it

Can Laser vision correction eliminate my reading glasses?

It is important not to confuse being short or long sighted, which is what Laser surgery is for, with the normal loss of ability to read with age which is called presbyopia. This loss of ability to read usually commences at about age 45 and is "superimposed" on top of your short or long sight. After laser surgery, this presbyopia is still present and cannot be corrected by any known means. There are ways of dealing with it such as "monovision" which is a technique where one eye is adjusted for near and the other for distance. This very important point needs to be carefully discussed prior to your procedure. If you are purely in need of reading glasses and do not have longsight, shortsight or astigmatism then Laser vision correction is not for you.

Is Laser vision correction permanent?

The results seem to be stable over time. Most patients do not experience significant changes in their vision once the postoperative results have stabilized, although this does not affect the normal aging changes of the eye. Again remember that if you are under the age of 45, you will develop presbyopia as you age.

Does Medicare cover LASIK?

Medicare does not cover Laser vision correction and it is not covered by private health insurance

What's the next step?

If you think that you may be suitable, you can arrange to have a screening assessment to determine if you are a good candidate. If you are then a full eye examination with an eye surgeon will be arranged.

