LASIK

While your ophthalmologist is using the laser, you will hear a clicking sound. After reshaping the cornea, your eye surgeon folds the flap back down into position and smooths the edges. The flap attaches on its own in 2–3 minutes, where it will heal in place.

After LASIK

The ophthalmologist may place a see-through shield over your eye or ask you to wear a shield while sleeping for a few days. This is to help protect your eye while it heals.

You should plan to go home and take a nap or just relax after the surgery. For a few hours, your eyes may feel scratchy or feel like they are burning. You will be given special eye drops to reduce dryness and help your eye heal.

What are the risks of LASIK?

Like any surgery, LASIK carries risks of problems or complications you should consider.

Some people have side effects after LASIK that usually go away over time. However, in rare cases, they may not go away. For example, almost everyone who has LASIK will have dry eyes and changing vision during the day. These symptoms usually fade within a month. For some people, though, they may take longer to dissipate or they may remain.

Other side effects, either temporary or permanent, could include:
- eye pain or discomfort
- hazy, foggy or blurry vision
- scratchy eye
- glare
- halos (rings) or starbursts around lights
- being sensitive to light
- small pink or red patches of blood on the white of the eye that go away over time

Other rare risks include:
- eye infection
- worse vision than before LASIK, even with glasses or contact lenses (called loss of best-corrected vision)
- blindness

Also, with LASIK, your vision may end up being undercorrected or overcorrected. These problems often can be improved with glasses, contact lenses, or additional laser surgery.

If you are happy wearing contacts or glasses, you may not want to have refractive surgery. Together, you and your ophthalmologist can weigh the risks and rewards of LASIK.

Vision after LASIK

About 9 out of 10 people (90%) who have LASIK end up with vision between 20/20 and 20/40—without glasses or contact lenses. It is important to know that LASIK cannot correct presbyopia. This is the normal, age-related loss of close-up vision. With or without this surgery, almost everyone who has excellent distance vision will need reading glasses after around age 40. To help with presbyopia, some people have LASIK to get monovision. This means one eye is left slightly nearsighted and the other eye is adjusted for distance vision. The brain learns to adapt so that the nearsighted eye is used for close work, while the other eye sees distant objects. Monovision is not for everyone. To see if you are able to adapt to this correction, you will probably want to try monovision with contact lenses first.

Summary

LASIK is a type of refractive surgery. With this outpatient procedure, a laser is used to reshape your cornea, improving how light rays are focused in the eye.

LASIK is used to treat myopia (near-sightedness), hyperopia (far-sightedness) and astigmatism. It cannot correct presbyopia, the normal loss of close-up vision that comes with age. However, some people have LASIK to achieve monovision. This allows them to use one eye for close vision and the other for seeing distant objects clearly.

With LASIK, people can do most of their everyday tasks without corrective lenses. However, you might need to wear glasses for certain activities, such as reading or driving at night.

Your ophthalmologist will thoroughly examine your eyes to make sure you are a good candidate for LASIK. You and your ophthalmologist will also discuss the risks and rewards of this refractive procedure.

If you have any questions about your eyes or your vision, speak with your ophthalmologist. He or she is committed to protecting your sight.
What is LASIK? LASIK is a type of refractive surgery. This kind of surgery uses a laser to treat vision problems caused by refractive errors. You have refractive errors if your eye does not refract (bend) light properly.

For you to see clearly, light rays must travel through your cornea and lens. The cornea and lens refract the light so it lands on the retina. The retina turns light into signals that travel to your brain and become images. With refractive errors, the shape of your cornea or lens keeps light from bending properly. When light is not focused on the retina as it should be, your vision is blurry.

Who is a good candidate for LASIK? To have LASIK surgery, you need to meet certain requirements. Here are some of them.

- You should be 18 years old or older.
- Your eye prescription should not have changed in the last year.
- Your corneas need to be healthy, and your overall eye health must be generally good.
- You need to have realistic expectations about what LASIK can and cannot do for you.

Some people are not candidates for LASIK. This is because your eye cannot be properly shaped or because your cornea is too thin. Your eye prescription should not have changed in the last year. Your eye prescription should not have changed in the last year. Your eye prescription should not have changed in the last year.

Eyes to Know
Cornea: Clear, dome-shaped window of the front of your eye. It focuses light into your eye.
Lens: Clear part of the eye behind the colored iris. It helps to focus light on the retina (back of the eye).
Retina: Nerve layer at the back of your eye. It sends light signals to the brain so you can see.

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