LASIK
Laser Eye Surgery

Office of Women's Health

LASIK is eye surgery done with a laser to help you see better. The laser makes tiny cuts that change the shape of the clear cover over the eye, the cornea. If done right, it can reduce a person's need for glasses or contact lenses.

Most patients are very pleased with the results. But there are risks, as with all surgery.

Is LASIK right for me?

Things to think about

- Cost—Most medical insurance will not pay for this surgery.
- LASIK won't work well if your sight changes often. Have you needed a change in your contact lenses or glasses in the past year? Vision changes are more likely if you are:
  - In your early 20s
  - Diabetic or have certain other diseases
  - Pregnant or breast-feeding
  - Taking medicines that cause vision changes, such as steroids
- Laser eye surgery is not a good choice for people who do contact sports. *Examples*: boxing, wrestling, martial arts.
- Laser surgery is not approved for anyone under age 18.
- Some jobs do not allow workers to have certain kinds of eye surgery. Check with your boss to make sure.

Find the right doctor

- How many surgeries has the doctor done with the same laser?
- Is this laser FDA-approved?
- Does this doctor take time to answer all your questions?

Things your doctor must look for before surgery

Your doctor needs to find out if you have any of these conditions:

- Past or current eye diseases, such as glaucoma and ocular hypertension
- Eye injuries or other laser eye surgery
- Large pupils, thin corneas, or dry eyes

If you choose LASIK

Before surgery:

- Your doctor should give you an informed consent form. Read and understand it. Get answers to all your questions.
- Have a detailed eye exam.
- Plan not to drive or work right after the surgery.

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After surgery:

- Take at least two days off work to rest and get better.
- You will have some pain for a few days.
- You will not be able to see clearly for a few days. Final results could take months.

To report a problem

The FDA controls the sale of the lasers used for LASIK. If you have a problem with LASIK eye surgery, first speak with your doctor. Then report the problem to FDA's MedWatch program at 1-800-332-1088. Or visit http://www.fda.gov and click on "MedWatch: Medical Product Reporting/Safety Information."

To Learn More:

FDA Center for Devices and Radiological Health
Phone: 1-888-463-6332.
http://www.fda.gov/cdrh/lasik