



# Baton Rouge's Guide to LASIK

**EMC**  
EYE MEDICAL CENTER  
Medical Excellence Since 1946

# **Your Guide To A Successful LASIK Procedure**

The word LASIK is actually an acronym for Laser Assisted In-Situ Keratomileusis. Thanks to advancements in safety, precision and diagnostics during the past decade, LASIK has become the most popular vision correction procedure ever performed. It has been deemed by the American Society of Cataract & Refractive Surgeons and the Eye Surgery Educational Council to be a safe and effective treatment for a wide range of common vision disorders, including myopia (nearsightedness), hyperopia (farsightedness), and astigmatism (a special form of nearsightedness or farsightedness). Since 1995, nearly three million people in the United States have successfully undergone the LASIK procedure.

With the help of the most advanced technology, CustomVue® LASIK has made laser vision correction more safe and accurate than ever before. CustomVue® LASIK allows doctors to make a virtual 'fingerprint of your eye' using WaveFront aberrometry, which allows surgeons to customize treatment plans for individual eyes. The result? A new level of visual excellence impossible to achieve with either glasses or contact lenses. In clinical trials, 98% of patients achieved 20/20 vision or better 12 months following their CustomVue® procedure.

For the vast majority of patients, LASIK improves vision and reduces dependence on prescription eyewear. However, as in any surgical procedure, there are inherent risks, complications, and side effects that can occur with LASIK. Therefore, it is essential that candidates considering this procedure are well informed and educated on both the benefits and the risks of LASIK.

The purpose of producing this educational guide is to help prospective patients make a more informed decision about improving their vision by reducing or eliminating their dependence on corrective eyewear through LASIK. The information presented in this guide is educational in nature and is not intended to serve as a substitute for medical advice, nor should it replace the informed consent process provided by doctors prior to patients having surgery.

## **Determining the Ideal Candidate for LASIK**

The ideal candidate for LASIK should meet the following criteria:

1. Be at least 18 years of age.
2. Have a stable prescription for glasses or contacts for at least two years.
3. Have adequate corneal thickness and pupil size for the procedure.
4. Have naturally occurring myopia, hyperopia, and/or astigmatism.
5. Have no medical disease or vision impairment that could reduce the effectiveness of the procedure.
6. Be adequately informed of the benefits and risks of the procedure.
7. Have a desire to reduce their dependence on corrective eyewear.
8. Have reasonable expectations.

Before choosing to have your LASIK procedure, be sure to discuss these criteria with your eye care professional.



## **Results You Can Expect From LASIK**

After LASIK surgery, the majority of patients with low to moderate levels of nearsightedness, farsightedness, and astigmatism achieve 20/20 vision or better. This level of vision enables patients to pass their driver's license test without glasses or contacts and enables them to perform most of their normal daily activities. Many patients – but not all – achieve 20/20 or their visual goal, depending in part on their preoperative, best-corrected visual acuity. Your postoperative goal will be determined by your age and the general health of your eyes. Patients with high to severe levels of nearsightedness, farsightedness, and astigmatism can still benefit greatly from LASIK, but they should discuss their special circumstances with the surgeon. If you do not achieve optimal results, a follow-up procedure – or enhancement – can be performed to further improve vision. Ask your surgeon if he or she maintains an active database of outcomes analysis.

## **Postoperative Management and Fees**

Final results from LASIK depend not only on the qualifications of the surgeon and the technology he or she uses to perform the procedure, but also on the patient following all pre- and post-op instruction and steps. This includes the postoperative management instruction that patients receive from the surgeon, technical staff, and/or co-managing doctor during the weeks and months following the procedure. Because fees for LASIK vary greatly from center to center, it is important to discuss postoperative costs with the surgeon performing your procedure. Patients should ensure that at least one full year of postoperative exams and follow-up visits are included in the global fee charged for the procedure. Some centers charge patients according to their level of refractive error to help make LASIK seem more affordable. Be sure to go over specific costs with your surgeon prior to undergoing the procedure.



## **The Surgeon/Patient Relationship**

In many of today's large corporate LASIK centers, patient access to their actual surgeon before and after their procedure is either limited or unavailable. The opportunity to meet your surgeon prior to your day of surgery - and have him or her perform your preoperative examination - allows patients to better understand their surgeon's philosophy of patient care and observe his or her "bedside manner." It also gives patients a great opportunity to have their surgeon address any final questions or concerns they have prior to surgery. Discussions with the surgeon performing the procedure should also include his or her results with patients who had a range of correction similar to yours.



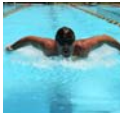


## **Conducting The Appropriate Pre-LASIK Testing**

To help ensure the best possible result from LASIK, all candidates should undergo extensive preoperative testing to rule out possible conditions that may affect your outcome. This special testing should include the following:

1. WaveFront Diagnostics – using WaveFront aberrometry to measure the entire optical system of the eye, WaveFront technology identifies and measures imperfections in the eye many times more precisely than standard methods used for glasses or contacts; this is the ultimate determining factor for LASIK candidacy.
2. Corneal Topography – a computerized ‘topographical map’ that measures up to 7000 locations on the corneal surface for possible irregularities. Patients with ectasia (steepness in the lower part of the cornea) or keratoconus (bulging of the cornea) may not be considered ideal candidates.
3. Pachymetry – technology that measures the thickness of the cornea to ensure adequate tissue is available for optimal results.
4. Pathology Exam – a dilated examination by an Eye MD to check for cataracts, glaucoma, retinal diseases and/or tears or holes, diabetes, AIDS, or herpes simplex inflammation that could slow the healing or impair the results.
5. Pupilometry Testing – measures the size of your pupil in maximum darkness to anticipate halos, starbursts, glare, and ghosting from an abnormal pupil size or shape.
6. Slit Lamp Exam – basic examination by an Eye MD to check the general health of the eye and check for irregularities in the cornea.
7. Schirmer Tearing Test – a test to detect possible dry eye syndrome, which can be exacerbated by LASIK surgery.
8. Refraction – testing to determine level of nearsightedness, farsightedness, and astigmatism under both non-dilated and dilated conditions.
9. Vision Goal – the patient’s desired outcome is defined based on accumulated information about his or her visual system.

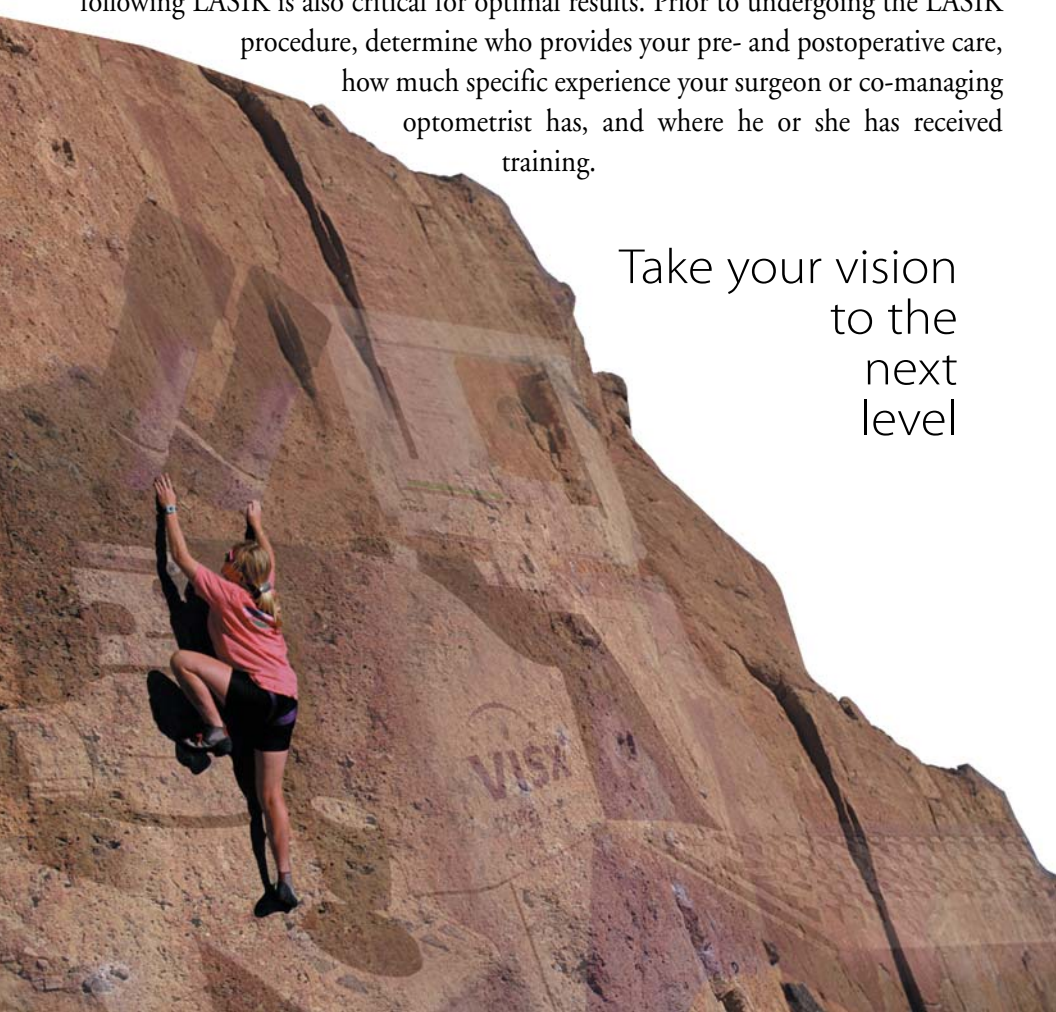
Be certain to ask your LASIK surgeon if all of the testing mentioned here will be included in your preoperative work-up prior to LASIK.



## Finding The Right Surgeon

Your results from LASIK will be directly related to the overall experience of your surgeon. To achieve optimal results from your LASIK procedure, seek a surgeon who is an active member of the American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery and is certified & trained on the latest VISX technology. It is also important to select a surgeon who carefully monitors his surgical outcomes (LASIK results) and makes those available for patients. According to a study conducted by the American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery, the level of intraoperative complications for experienced surgeons is 0.9% compared to a complication rate of 4.5% of less-experienced surgeons. Continuity of postoperative care and surgeon availability following LASIK is also critical for optimal results. Prior to undergoing the LASIK procedure, determine who provides your pre- and postoperative care, how much specific experience your surgeon or co-managing optometrist has, and where he or she has received training.

Take your vision  
to the  
next  
level



## **Making LASIK safer:**

One of the major obstacles preventing most patients from enjoying the benefits is their fear of the procedure. Statistics involving thousands of patients indicate that the more understanding and working knowledge a patient has of LASIK, the more capable he or she becomes in making an informed and educational decision regarding vision correction. This includes helping them overcome their basic fear of the procedure.

Fortunately, new technology now available in Toledo is further helping patients reduce their fear and anxiety of LASIK. LASIK involves making a thin protective flap in the cornea, then reshaping the inner tissue using an Excimer laser. Traditionally, this protective flap was created using a hand-held mechanical instrument called a microkeratome which contains a metal blade that slices into the cornea. Although relatively safe, the microkeratome can produce a rough and irregular corneal surface that can affect the quality of vision. To eliminate the potential problems caused by a bladed cut, femtosecond lasers have added a tremendous level of safety and accuracy to flap creation with over a million procedures performed to date.

The IntraLase femtosecond laser represents the next level of excellence in flap creation. Using its ultra-fast, tightly focused, low energy laser beam, microscopic bubbles are created at the precise depth within the cornea. This causes the layers of the cornea to separate thereby creating a LASIK flap of the desired thickness, size, orientation and location, unique to each patient's needs. The bubbles created by the IntraLase disappear soon after the flap is lifted, creating a smoother surface and allowing the LASIK procedure to be performed.

This tremendous level of control and customization makes LASIK safer, speeds visual recovery, makes our patients more comfortable, and contributes to better visual outcomes.

## **The Right Operating Environment**

Factors such as humidity levels and room temperature in a laser environment can affect LASIK results. Therefore, it is critical to ensure your procedure is performed in a controlled, 'medically-clean' environment, where conditions such as humidity, air quality, and temperature are closely monitored and maintained. Best results will be achieved in 'dedicated' laser suites with proper air exchange and controls that have been designed specifically for LASIK and the type of laser technology in the laser center.



# Reputation and Research

Choosing a LASIK center with a proven reputation for leading-edge technology and uncompromised patient care will further enhance the overall LASIK experience. Unfortunately, many corporate and discount LASIK centers today frequently change surgical teams and surgeons, making it difficult to maintain the highest standards and continuity in quality patient care. Surgeons who are involved in ongoing research and development are continually exposed to the latest breakthroughs in technology and surgical techniques long before the average surgeon. For optimal LASIK results, have your procedure performed at a comprehensive eye care facility with an experienced refractive surgical team dedicated to research, technology, and complete patient satisfaction.

In addition, ophthalmologists who provide “full service” surgical and general eye care can handle your needs now and into the future. Choosing such a surgical team gives you access to the most up-to-date techniques and medical advances available today.



**The Eye Medical Laser Center**  
**7777 Hennessy Blvd. Suite 1002**  
**Baton Rouge, LA 70808**