

LASIK:

Preparation and What to Expect

Things to Know Before Surgery:

1. You may eat a light meal and take your usual medicines before surgery. It would be advisable to avoid caffeine, such as coffee, tea, cola, or hot chocolate.
2. Please have your prescriptions filled before surgery. Take the Valium 60 minutes before your scheduled arrival time. Bring your drops with you to surgery and to your post-op appointments.
3. Wear comfortable clothing to the office. As it is usually cool in the laser room, you may want to wear a sweater or jacket.
4. Please do not wear make-up of any kind as well as any perfume or aerosolized agents on the day of surgery.
5. Soft contact lenses should be removed at least 3 weeks prior to surgery. Hard or rigid gas permeable contact lenses should be removed a minimum of 1 month prior to surgery. Stability of your refractive error must be established before surgery. You may wear a disposable soft contact lens as the corneas unmold, but these, too, must be removed 3 weeks prior to surgery.
6. All financial arrangements should be finalized with Dr. Brown before your surgery. If you need financing, contact our office at least one week prior to your surgery.
7. You will need a driver on the day of surgery and again on the following day. After the first day, most people can drive, but gauge this according to your own comfort and abilities.

What to Expect the Day of Surgery

1. Let us know if you have questions or concerns at any time. If you have specific questions for Dr. Brown, please let us know upon your arrival so we can accommodate your concerns before your procedure.
2. Take your Valium 60 minutes before the scheduled arrival time. We want you to be relaxed, but not excessively sedated.
3. You will receive several drops to the eyes to numb the surface of the eye. These act quickly and will keep you from having pain. Sensation of pressure or of the lid speculum spreading the lids apart will not be completely eliminated, but are not excessively uncomfortable.
4. Dr. Brown will talk with you and go over the procedure with you before you enter the laser room.

What to Expect in the Laser Room

1. Dr. Brown will talk you through each step of the procedure.
2. Your eyelids will be cleaned with Betadine. We ask that you rest your hands at your side for the duration of the procedure.

3. You will be asked to recline in an operating chair, which is adjusted to precisely center your eye under the microscope of the laser.
4. A patch is placed over the unoperated eye, and a piece of gauze is placed beside the operating eye with tape to catch any excess tears or drainage.
5. You will be asked to stare straight ahead at a light during the procedure to properly align your eye during treatment. The tracker on the laser compensates for small movements.
6. Your eyelids will be covered with an adhesive drape.
7. A silver suction ring is placed on the surface of the eye. When the suction is activated, you will feel pressure and your vision will temporarily go dark. This is normal and lasts only for a few seconds.
8. During this time, the flap is made and you will hear a whirring noise. Do not be alarmed. Your vision comes back when the ring is removed.
9. A lid holder called a lid speculum is placed between the eyelids. This does not hurt and will serve to keep the lids apart to allow for the laser treatment.
10. You will be asked to look at the light as the treatment is applied. The laser is pre-programmed with your precise refractive error. You will hear a snapping noise made by the laser, but you will feel no pain.
11. The laser does not burn, but the debris produced by the laser has a slightly unpleasant odor. You will notice changes in the target light as the laser reshapes your cornea.
12. Most surgeries take less than 30 seconds of laser. Sometimes the treatment is broken into parts. Dr. Brown will continually remind you to keep looking at the light.
13. The excimer laser can be started and stopped precisely within a fraction of a second. Dr. Brown will maintain control throughout the procedure and he will stop the laser if your eye moves or loses fixation.
14. Once the laser is complete, the flap is replaced and irrigated with a salt-water solution which will feel cool.
15. The flap is gently positioned with moist sponges and dried with oxygen.
16. Artificial tears and salt water are used to lubricate the flap. Then the lid speculum and drapes are removed. Dr. Brown will ask you to keep your eyes open until he tells you to blink.

What to Expect After Surgery

1. Your eyes will be examined, your vision evaluated, and antibiotic drops placed in both eyes.
2. Clear shields will be placed over both eyes. These should be worn when napping or sleeping for the first week to prevent accidental rubbing.

3. Instructions will be discussed with you. Keeping your eyes closed as much as possible after surgery will help the healing and promote comfort.
4. Do not rub or bump your eyes as this could dislodge the corneal flap. The flap is secure within a few hours, but you should avoid bumping or vigorously rubbing the eyes for 2 months.

What to do Immediately After Surgery

1. Go home and rest. Sleep is your best healing tool. Taking it easy for the first 24 to 48 hours is best. Most people can return to driving and working within one to two days.
2. There is no need to take extended sick leave, but do not schedule a full week of activity following surgery.
3. Use your eyedrops twice on the day of surgery after arriving home. Most people find dinner and bedtime convenient times to apply drops.
4. After the first day, the drops will be used 4 times per day for one week.
5. Frequent use of artificial tears is strongly recommended.
6. You may take your shields off to put in drops, but replace the shields until Dr. Brown sees you on the first post-operative day.

Precautions and Restrictions

1. Avoid getting water in the eye for the first week.
2. No swimming for 2 months and no water skiing for 3 months. During this time do not expose the eye to water from a whirlpool or hot tub.
3. Do not bathe or shower until you have been seen on the first post-operative day. After that, showers and baths are fine as long as water in the eyes is avoided.
4. Avoid dirty, dusty, or smoky environments for a week. Cigarette smoke is especially irritating.
5. Most people can resume normal exercise in 3 days.

What to Expect Long Term

1. In general, 80% of your fully-corrected vision should be experienced within 1 to 2 weeks. Though many people are faster, some are slower to recover.
2. Dry eyes are common after laser surgery. Artificial tears are very helpful. Blowing or swirling air makes the sensation of dry eyes worse.
3. By the one-month post-operative visit, if enhancement is needed, it should be apparent. The timing of enhancement will be up to Dr. Brown.

4. For people over the age of 40, reading glasses will be helpful for some fine tasks like reading the phone book or doing extended reading. These can be used as desired.

◆ Notes and Questions ◆



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