

Laser Eye Surgery Information For Patients

This information sheet is for patients who are interested in laser eye surgery. There may be more than one option available to you, and these will be discussed at your consultation at the clinic. In meantime, you may find the following information useful.

Procedures

LASIK (Laser in situ keratomileusis) – A flap of corneal tissue is lifted using a specialised instrument called a microkeratome and the laser applied to the deeper stromal layers of the cornea. After treatment the flap is replaced. This technique is usually done bilaterally, as visual recovery is rapid with minimal discomfort.

PRK (Photorefractive keratectomy) – The epithelium (surface layer of the cornea) is removed completely from the central area of the cornea so that the laser can treat the anterior stroma. As the eye recovers, the epithelium grows back to cover the treated area over a period of 3 days. There is more discomfort during the initial recovery period when compared with LASIK, so each eye is usually treated on separate days.

LASEK (Laser epithelial keratomileusis) - This is essentially the same treatment as PRK except that an alcohol is used to separate the epithelium from the stroma. It is then rolled back so that the laser can treat the underlying stroma. Where possible, the epithelium is put back after treatment which can help to reduce discomfort and speed up visual recovery.

If you have a consultation already booked please check with the clinic for any instructions that may need to be followed before attending for your consultation. The following is a list of typical instructions and is not specific to any clinic.

Information for patients attending for pre-operative consultation

The following information will be helpful during your consultation:

- Copies of the prescription with visual acuity measurements from the last three eye examinations.
- Current contact lens prescription where applicable.
- Baseline keratometry readings taken at initial contact lens fitting if available.
- Details of any medical or ocular history that may affect suitability for treatment.

The following instructions are important for any patient intending to attend for a consultation.

- Soft contact lens wearers need to leave their lenses out for a minimum of 1 week. Rigid lens wearers must leave lenses out for at least 2 weeks.
- Eyedrops will be administered to dilate the pupils or to complete the vision assessment. This may cause some sensitivity to light; therefore you should come accompanied to the clinic if possible as it is not advisable to drive home afterwards. You may wish to bring sunglasses to avoid discomfort glare after dilation.
- Please bring a list of any medications that you are taking.
- Your consultation will last approximately 2 hours.