



A COMPLETE GUIDE TO LASIK SURGERY



Maria Scott, M.D.



Dr. Maria Scott is the founder and medical director of Chesapeake Eye Care and Laser Center and the medical director of TLC Laser Eye Center Annapolis. She is one of the nation's most respected cataract and refractive surgeons. With a reputation for excellence that extends from her patients to colleagues throughout the medical community, her passion to improve her patients' quality of life is evident throughout every aspect of the practice. Always ahead of the curve, she is often the first to offer new techniques and treatments to her patients and was the first person to offer LASIK in Annapolis. Focused on results, she has one of the lowest enhancement rates for LASIK patients in the country.

Recognized as a leader in her industry, Dr. Scott trains and supervises other ophthalmologists in laser vision correction and hosts symposiums throughout the year in order to keep her colleagues abreast of the latest ophthalmic treatments. She is a member of the prestigious Society for Excellence in Eyecare, an organization of eye care specialists personally selected and recognized for their leadership and innovation. She is a member of the American Society of Cataract & Refractive Surgeons, American Academy of Ophthalmology, Ophthalmic Women Leaders, Women in Ophthalmology and the American College of Eye Surgeons. Since 2011, she has served on the board of directors of the Anne Arundel Medical Center Foundation.

Accolades from peers in the medical community and patients have brought Dr. Scott numerous awards, including What's Up Annapolis "Top Doc" honors, the Capital Gazette's "Readers' Choice for Ophthalmology", Bay Weekly's "Best of the Bay – Best Place for LASIK", and the Vitals "Patients' Choice for Top Ophthalmologist."



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Is LASIK Right for Me?

Glasses can be a fun fashion accessory, but you might wonder what it would be like to be free of them. Contact lenses work fine, but they may preclude you from certain lifestyle activities and they require maintenance, such as cleaning, storing and changing. It's no wonder that many people dream about life without corrective lenses.



Are You a Good Candidate for Lasik?

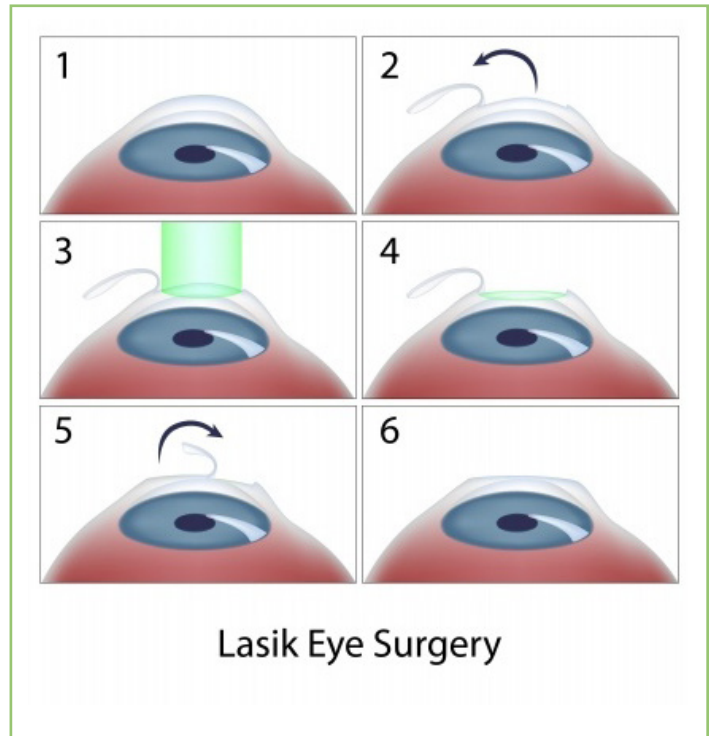
Dr. Maria Scott, a board-certified refractive surgeon, will examine your eyes carefully to make sure you are a good candidate for LASIK. If you are at least 21 years of age, have good eye health with no diseases such as cataracts or glaucoma, and are in good overall health, you may be a candidate for LASIK.

In addition to looking at the uniqueness of your eyes, it is equally important to discuss your lifestyle and visual expectations with the surgeon prior to surgery. You will also want to discuss the type of work you do, as it may impact your candidacy. For example, some military positions and other fields have stipulations for LASIK. If you think you might fall into this category, you'll want to check with your supervisor before having eye surgery. Lastly, as with any surgical procedure, there are risks and these will be discussed during your consultation.

How LASIK Works

During LASIK surgery, anesthetic drops are applied to the eye. Then the surgeon creates a protective flap in the cornea (the part of the eye that helps you focus light to create an image on your retina) using a bladeless laser. This flap is then gently lifted as the surgeon applies computer-controlled pulses of cool laser light to the inner layers of the cornea. The inner corneal layer is reshaped with the laser to improve vision or eliminate the need for prescription lenses.

Introduced in the United States in the 1990s, LASIK corrects refractive errors in your vision that cause the most common vision problems, including near-sightedness (myopia), far-sightedness (hyperopia) and astigmatism. LASIK surgery helps some 700,000 patients each year to reduce their dependence on glasses and contacts, but not everyone is a candidate for the surgery.



Choosing a Surgeon: Questions to Ask

Thanks to new technology, LASIK surgery is now safer and more effective than ever. It is still important, however, to minimize your risk of negative side effects by choosing a highly skilled and experienced LASIK surgeon to perform your procedure. When considering LASIK surgery be sure to address each of the questions listed below with the practice and surgeon you are considering.

What Percent of Your Patients Need an After-Surgery Enhancement?

Nationwide, about eight percent of all patients require a second adjustment surgery after their initial LASIK surgery. A surgeon's enhancement rate is a good marker of his or her skill. You should look for a surgeon with an enhancement rate below 8%; the lower the better. Dr. Maria Scott of Chesapeake Eye Care and Laser Center, for example, has an enhancement rate of just 1.5%, which indicates that she performs her operations very precisely and with great care.

What Equipment is Used to Perform the Surgery?

Make sure that any equipment used to perform the LASIK surgery is approved by the FDA. Here at Chesapeake Eye Care and Laser Center, we use AMO's IntraLase™ laser, a 4th-generation laser designed primarily for LASIK and advanced corneal surgery procedures. It is important to make sure that your surgeon offers the most advanced, proven technology and testing to achieve the best results possible.

How is the Flap Created?

The first step in LASIK surgery is the creation of a flap in the cornea. In traditional LASIK, this flap is made with a handheld scalpel. Some surgeons still prefer to create the flap in this manner, which is an acceptable method. Others, including Dr. Maria Scott at Chesapeake Eye Care and Laser Center, use a special laser to create the flap. Known as blade-free LASIK and all-laser LASIK, this flap creation technique is associated with a lower risk of flap complications than traditional LASIK.

Who Handles Patient Aftercare?

It is ideal for your surgeon or his/her team of doctors to be involved in your aftercare. This assures that any problems are detected early and you receive accurate, thorough answers to your questions post-surgery. In some laser surgery clinics, however, aftercare is overseen by medical technicians rather than the surgeons themselves. Asking each surgeon how post-surgery visits are handled is important to know ahead of time.

Do You Have Any Concerns Regarding My Suitability for LASIK Surgery?

Good LASIK surgeons conduct thorough eye exams before telling you whether or not they consider you a candidate for the surgery. Never agree to have LASIK surgery performed by a LASIK surgeon who does not perform pre-operative testing and a thorough eye exam, or by one who is not willing to discuss your personal risks with you in-depth before the procedure.

Your LASIK surgeon should be willing to discuss any medical conditions that you have and how they might impact the effectiveness and safety of LASIK for you. It is also important for your surgeon to understand your lifestyle and visual expectations. These are important factors for your candidacy, as well as pre-operative tests.

What Kind of Training and Experience do You Have?

When considering a LASIK surgeon, make sure they are board-certified ophthalmologists who have experience performing LASIK surgery and ask them about their results. Finding a skilled, well-trained surgeon who has a consistent record for delivering great results is important in making your decision.



As you interview different LASIK surgeons, be sure to ask these questions and don't be afraid to jot down notes as the surgeons respond. Surgeons who have solid answers to your questions, a consistent track record for delivering results, a great reputation in the community, advanced technology, and thorough eye exams to determine your candidacy are likely to be the most qualified to perform this precise and specialized operation.



Preparing for LASIK

Now that you've made the decision to get LASIK to correct your nearsightedness, farsightedness or astigmatism, you might be a bit nervous, wondering what to expect, what your recovery will be and how to prepare for your upcoming procedure so you can achieve the best possible outcome.

Preparing for Your Procedure

Prior to your LASIK eye surgery, you'll meet with one of our professional and dedicated staff members to go over your expectations, preparations you should make, and anything pertaining to your individual case and procedure. Any specific concerns you may have can be addressed at that time; however, in preparing for your LASIK eye surgery, there are a few requirements you'll need to follow in order to ensure a successful outcome.

If you wear contact lenses, you'll need to follow certain protocols depending on the type of lens. You will need to remove your contact lenses according to the following schedule:

- Soft Daily Wear – Two weeks prior to wavescan pictures and surgery.
- Toric – Three weeks prior to wavescan pictures and surgery.
- Extended Wear – Four weeks prior to wavescan pictures and surgery.
- Rigid Gas Permeables (RGPs) and Hard Lenses (PMMAs) – dependent on use. You will need to discuss this with your surgeon.

Given these requirements, you should schedule your initial evaluation at least a month in advance and, at that time, switch to glasses only. The reason you'll need to remove your

lenses and change over to glasses only is that contact lenses distort the shape of your cornea. That's why they work. By giving your eyes an opportunity to form their normal shape, you can be sure the corrections made by your LASIK eye surgeon meet your needs and result in the best possible outcome.

Don't wear eye makeup or use eye creams for at least 24-48 hours prior to your surgery. You may be given specific instructions on how to clean your eye area prior to the procedure. Additionally, you may have other preparations to follow such as not using hairspray, powders, lotions or scented products the day of surgery. By following the specific instructions provided by your doctor, you will lower your risk of infection.

The morning of your procedure, you may feel a bit nervous. This is expected and the professional staff at our clinic will do everything possible to make you comfortable. Be sure to eat a light meal and bring someone with you, or arrange for a ride home. Although the procedure is typically over in 15-20 minutes, having a friend or family member close by can be a comfort. Also, you will need someone to drive you home, since your vision will be unfocused and blurry.

What to Expect the Day of Your Surgery

LASIK is a quick and painless procedure that can significantly improve your vision and dramatically impact your lifestyle. Here is a summary of what happens on the day of LASIK surgery.

Before LASIK

Before carrying out the procedure, your eye doctor will examine your eyes to ensure that you are a suitable candidate for LASIK. One of the exams will include the use of a corneal topographer to record the shape of your cornea. LASIK works by subtly changing the curvature of this part of your eye so that it is better able to focus light.

The LASIK Procedure

Before beginning your laser eye surgery, your surgeon will use numbing eye drops to prevent discomfort. Specific medical equipment will be used to gently hold your eyelid open during surgery to prevent you from blinking.

The first step in the LASIK procedure is to create a flap in the cornea either by using a laser or a very precise blade. Once the flap has been created and carefully lifted, the surgeon applies computer-controlled pulses of cool laser light to the inner layers of the cornea. The inner corneal layer is reshaped with the laser to improve vision or eliminate the need for prescription lenses. You should not feel any pain as the laser correction takes place. You might experience a slight sensation of pressure.

The procedure uses Iris Registration, an alignment method that maps 40 points on the



iris and focuses the laser using these points, to track eye movements to ensure precise correction. When one lies down, the eyes naturally rotate and the pupils may migrate. Iris Registration detects any eye movement and allows the laser to rotate with these movements to ensure accurate treatment. The surgeon then gently replaces the flap and aligns it to its



original position. The whole procedure takes about 15 to 20 minutes.

After the Procedure

After surgery, you will need someone to drive you home. Your LASIK eye surgeon will suggest taking a long nap and rest as much as possible to allow the eyes to heal. To prevent accidental rubbing while the flap is healing, patients will be given a protective shield to wear at night following surgery. Some patients may feel slight irritation for a few hours, but most are quite comfortable after a nap and rest.

Most patients will experience a 50% improvement by that evening and 70% improvement by the next day. A patient's vision should be fully restored within 1 – 4 days

without the need for any corrective lenses. Most patients return to regular daily activity within 24 hours.

What to Expect After Surgery

After LASIK eye surgery, you will have a follow-up appointment to check your vision and determine whether you need further correction. Although TLC research findings show more than 90 percent of people who have LASIK achieve somewhere between 20/20 and 20/40 vision without glasses or contact lenses after surgery, there is no guarantee of perfect 20/20 vision after eye surgery. However, a review paper published by the American Academy of Ophthalmology reported that 95.4% of patients are satisfied with the results they achieved through LASIK eye surgery.¹

1 - [http://www.aaojournal.org/article/S0161-6420\(08\)01337-7/abstract](http://www.aaojournal.org/article/S0161-6420(08)01337-7/abstract)

A LASIK Success Story

One of our patients was willing to share how LASIK affected her every day life and activities – read firsthand how LASIK can change your life!

What made you finally take the plunge and get LASIK?

Shaina: I had been thinking about doing it for at least 10 years. In the months leading up to my decision to finally have LASIK surgery, I talked to lots of people that had LASIK. I received positive feedback from them and just decided I was tired of my glasses and needed a change. Talking to others helped me overcome my fear of problems that could occur from the surgery.

What was your life like before LASIK?

Shaina: I wasted time in the morning looking for where I left my glasses. I was unhappy with wearing glasses to social events - contacts were uncomfortable for me. I did not like the look of my glasses and the cost of prescription sunglasses.

What held you back from getting LASIK?

Shaina: I was scared of complications from surgery, like getting dry eyes, my vision not being altered enough, and having life- long problems from surgery.

How has LASIK changed your life?

Shaina: I feel FREE! I can just get up and go! I don't have to look for my glasses. I don't have to worry about them fogging up or getting wet during outdoor activities. I don't have any more dents on the bridge of my nose. I don't have to



*Dr. Maria Scott with
Shaina Solomon, LASIK patient*

think about wearing contacts to social events and how uncomfortable they will be.

Now having LASIK, are you more likely to pursue different activities?

Shaina: Not really, but Lasik makes all of the activities I do sooo much better. I don't have



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to worry about losing my glasses when I go swimming, to the beach, kayaking, paddle boarding, etc. I don't have to worry about my glasses falling off and getting broken.

What would you tell someone who is considering LASIK?

Shaina: Talk to others who had it done. Carefully follow all the pre- and post-op instructions....don't get lazy with the drops. Be ready to enjoy life free of glasses and contacts. Months after the procedure you won't be able to remember what life was like with glasses and will wish you had done it sooner.

Why did you decide to have Dr. Maria Scott do your surgery?

Shaina: I selected Dr. Maria Scott based on her experience and reputation. As I researched a surgeon for LASIK, I found that Dr. Scott has received many awards and accolades from colleagues and patients. I also happened to run into many of Dr. Scott's patients around Annapolis and they spoke very highly of her, the LASIK process and her incredible results.

What Does LASIK Cost?

LASIK eye surgery will vary in price depending on your treatment and the service provider; however, there are average amounts that you can use to estimate the per eye cost of surgery. If you think the surgery is for you, starting to save early and planning financially is a great option.



Don't be Fooled by Cheap Deals

Consumers will often see ridiculously low price offers for LASIK eye surgery. These offers can be very misleading and result in you having a procedure that is not right for your eyes. When determining where to have your surgery, your decision should be based on more than just price. Other factors including the surgeon's experience, results, equipment (type of laser), and current condition of your eyes weigh heavily on the cost of surgery as well as the outcomes you can expect.

Costs for surgery vary depending on the type of LASIK surgery you get. Traditional LASIK is the least expensive. If you have Custom LASIK or Custom Bladeless LASIK, you can expect the cost to increase. Using the most advanced technology often enhances the results. When

making your decision to have LASIK surgery, it is important to consider the experience and skill of the surgeon and the technology she or he uses.

Health Insurance May Help

Health insurance should definitely be on your mind when considering LASIK eye surgery. Most insurance companies do not cover LASIK, but you should always contact your insurance provider to determine if your health plan covers any part of the surgery.

Flexible-Spending Accounts can Cut Costs

The use of a flexible-spending account can help you reduce your LASIK eye surgery bill. Contributions to this type of account are made through pre-tax payroll deductions. Because the funds are not taxed, they represent a substantial savings towards the cost of the procedure.

Figuring out how much LASIK eye surgery costs can be confusing. Start by speaking with a qualified LASIK eye surgeon to determine what procedure you need. From there, you can estimate costs and start planning ahead for your big LASIK day.



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