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If You're Not A Candidate For Lasik, There Are Other Options

For those with poor eyesight mainly due to nearsightedness, LASIK (Laser-Assisted In situ Keratomileusis) surgery has well established itself as a viable solution. The surgery, which has seen much advancement over the years, effectively reshapes the cornea to enable light entering the eye to be properly focused onto the retina for improved vision.

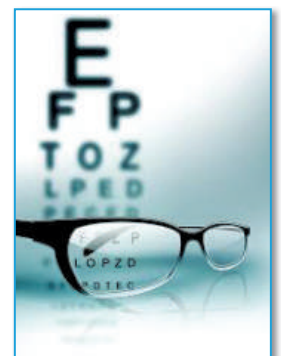
LASIK is the most commonly performed laser eye surgery, but what you may not know is not everyone is a candidate for the procedure. For a doctor to deduce you as eligible for LASIK, they will examine the shape and thickness of your cornea, pupil size, refractive error, and other eye conditions. For example, for a patient with a normal but very thin cornea, Photorefractive Keratectomy (PRK) will be recommended instead. Before LASIK, PRK, which is performed on the surface of the eye, was widely used.

Another LASIK alternative a candidate might be steered toward is the Visian ICL (Implantable Contact Lens).



TLC Eyecare & Laser Centers' cataract & refractive specialist, Dr. Luis Gago, explains that age and near-sightedness can be factors. "Say you come in and you are extremely nearsighted, for example a minus 15 prescription and 29 years old," he says. "We generally don't use LASIK for a minus 15 correction." In the Visian ICL procedure, your eye's natural lens isn't replaced. Rather, an intraocular lens is placed between the iris and natural lens. It behaves like an implantable contact lens. Some patients will voluntarily go this route to avoid the permanence of laser vision correction, even if they are LASIK candidates.

For those with far-sighted vision and are over the age of 45, the LASIK alternative is Refractive Lens Exchange (RLE), which is basically cataract surgery. In this procedure your natural lens is removed and replaced with a man-made lens, allowing you to be less dependent on strong prescription glasses or contact lenses. The benefit here, as Dr. Gago explains, is the implant power can be selected, which will properly correct the patient's vision. For example, a farsighted patient who has a plus 4 prescription can be reduced to wearing nothing for distance, but using reading glasses for near vision.



In the evaluation process for LASIK, the most important thing is to make sure the corneas are normal. The process isn't too intensive, as the patient undergoes a wave scan and a full-dilated exam. Comparably, the ICL evaluation is more extensive. While the pre-procedure process is longer than LASIK, the results are excellent. About 30 percent of patients gain 1 to 2 lines of best-corrected vision. As for RLE, the extensiveness of its evaluation is somewhere in the middle of LASIK and ICL.

While LASIK is the most widely known vision correction procedure, there are other options such as the Visian ICL and Refractive Lens Exchange, with their own benefits ranging from healing time to effectiveness.

To learn more about the procedures or to schedule an appointment to discuss your vision correction options, visit tleyecare.com or call **1-877-TLC-TIME**.