

# conventional and CustomLASIK patient FAQ

## **Am I a good candidate for LASIK?**

The best way for you to determine this is with a thorough exam from your eye doctor. Appropriate candidates must be at least 18 years old, in good general health, and have good eye health with no diseases such as cataracts or glaucoma. LASIK can treat a very broad range of nearsightedness, farsightedness, and astigmatism.

Through an initial consultation with your eye doctor or at the nearest TLC Center, your doctor will confirm if you are a good candidate, explain the procedure, and answer your questions so that you can make an informed decision. He or she will explain what results you can reasonably expect by measuring your prescription and thoroughly examining your eyes. TLC Laser Eye Centers® has a consistent record of doing what is best for the patient. In fact, many people choose TLC based upon our reputation for excellent patient care.

## **I have heard about CustomLASIK. What is this procedure?**

CustomLASIK is a procedure that involves the use of a wavefront analyzer and enables your surgeon to customize the Conventional LASIK procedure to your individual eyes. This customized procedure can result in patients seeing clearer and sharper than ever before.

## **What is the difference between Conventional LASIK and CustomLASIK?**

CustomLASIK uses a tool called the wavefront analyzer to accurately measure the way light travels through your eye. The data from the resulting map of your eye is then programmed into the laser, and the laser treats your eye based upon that personalized 3D map. CustomLASIK helps to treat “higher order” aberrations, which are tiny imperfections in the eye that can have a significant impact on one’s quality of vision. In fact, higher order aberrations have been linked to visual glare and halos. Higher order aberrations have not been previously treatable with contacts, glasses, or Conventional LASIK.

Conventional LASIK is still a very good choice for many patients, though most will prefer the higher level of customization that CustomLASIK can provide. Ultimately, you need to discuss the options with your doctor. You can trust your TLC-affiliated eye care professional to help you make the correct decision.

## **Is the actual LASIK procedure performed the same way? Or is CustomLASIK a completely different procedure?**

The actual LASIK procedure is performed in exactly the same way in both Conventional LASIK and CustomLASIK. The pre-op testing for Conventional LASIK and CustomLASIK can differ greatly. The data from the resulting map created by the wavefront analyzer is programmed into the laser which creates the CustomLASIK procedure.

## **I've heard a lot of great things about LASIK. What can LASIK do for me?**

While LASIK has proven overwhelmingly successful in reducing dependence on glasses and contact lenses, the degree of improvement may vary among individuals. How well and how quickly your vision improves depends on how well you heal and the severity of your prescription.

Although TLC cannot promise patients “perfect” or 20/20 vision, most laser patients with mild to moderate prescriptions do achieve 20/20 vision or are within 1 to 2 lines of 20/20 vision on an eye chart. This means they no longer need glasses or contacts to drive, play sports, watch movies and TV, or participate in careers requiring excellent vision such as police officers and fire fighters.

Additionally, CustomLASIK has proven to be an exciting development. Clinical studies have shown that CustomLASIK can improve not only what you can see but how well you can see it.

In the past, all vision was measured using a standard vision chart. If you could see the letters, the doctor would proclaim your vision as a number, such as 20/20, 20/100, etc. But now, with CustomLASIK, doctors are able to focus on the quantity and *quality* of your vision. Many patients who have had CustomLASIK are reporting being able to see clearer than ever before. It's as if someone had taken an ink pad and freshly stamped each letter on the vision chart in bold black letters. Because CustomLASIK corrects the unique imperfections in each individual's vision, it is likely that night vision will be improved.

Your pre-procedure consultation with your eye doctor will help determine the range of your probable outcome based on your particular prescription, healing profile, and expectations. The results and research gained from more than half a million procedures performed through TLC are shared throughout our network, allowing doctors to continually fine-tune techniques, more effectively forecast visual results and counsel new patients. Keep in mind, as a patient ages the need for reading glasses is quite common.

TLC stands behind its patients' distance vision results for life because we have confidence in the stability of results over the long-term. The TLC Lifetime Commitment<sup>SM</sup> program ensures free enhancement procedures for life for qualified nearsighted patients - and this commitment will be honored by any TLC location in North America. Be sure to ask your local TLC location for important details about this program.

## **How will I know what procedure I need to have?**

Your eye care professional is the best person to tell you that. CustomLASIK is necessary for some and desirable for many. Everyone's eyes are different, and your eyes may best be treated with CustomLASIK. You should schedule a consultation with your eye doctor. Together, you can determine what is right for you.

## **What does LASIK cost? Is there a price difference between Conventional LASIK and CustomLASIK?**

TLC has locations in the U.S. and in Canada. The price of the procedure is determined by the technology recommended for your specific condition and the center location. For information on pricing, call 1-888-CALL-TLC.

The cost of CustomLASIK is generally greater than the cost of Conventional LASIK.

CustomLASIK is performed using some of the most advanced technology in the vision industry. The procedure combines the technology of the wavefront analyzer with the precision of a computerized laser and the skill of your respected surgeon.

### **Who will my doctors be and what will they do?**

Doctors are involved in all three phases of your LASIK procedure: the pre-operative consultation, the LASIK procedure, and post-operative care. Two doctors are involved in the overall procedure: the TLC affiliated surgeon who performs the procedure itself at the TLC center and your own eye doctor who can provide your pre- and post-operative care (if you do not currently have an eye doctor, your pre and post-operative care can also be provided at TLC).

Although TLC affiliated surgeons are renowned for their training and expertise, the outcome of your LASIK procedure also depends upon the right care before and after your surgery. We recommend you consult with your own eye doctor who is more familiar with your eyes and your history and who will continue to care for you years after your procedure. If you don't have an eye doctor who can help, we'll provide you with one. We will work very closely with your eye doctor to provide you with a high level of care and results.

### **What do I need to know about different laser technologies?**

TLC, through our network of more than 70 centers, has access to the latest laser technologies including eye trackers and scanning lasers. The eye tracker follows your eye movements, ensuring that the laser will stay focused and give you the most accurate treatment possible. Scanning lasers continually adjust the laser beam so that it is the right size, adding up to a procedure customized specifically for you. All TLC centers in the United States use only FDA-approved lasers to gently reshape the cornea during LASIK. These excimer lasers use cool, computer-controlled beams of ultra-violet light. The best laser technology for you is determined during the personal TLC consultation and is dependent on such things as prescription, thickness of the cornea, size of the pupil, and ocular anatomy.

### **Will the procedure hurt?**

Most patients find the procedure to be slightly uncomfortable. One good way to learn more about how it might feel is to talk to someone who has had the procedure, such as a friend, relative, or a staff member at the doctor's office. For most patients, the feeling of anxiety and the fear of the unknown is worse than the actual procedure.

Anesthetic drops are used to numb the eye just before surgery begins, and you may be given a mild sedative. After your procedure, your eye may feel a foreign body sensation or irritation for a few hours, but most patients are quite comfortable after taking a short nap. You will be given drops for your eyes to counteract the potential dryness you may experience for several days following the surgery.

### **What will my recovery be like?**

Most LASIK patients usually see quite well the day following their procedure and may be able to resume most of their normal daily activities, but patients with higher prescriptions may recover more slowly. Although the speed of visual recovery depends on personal healing patterns, most patients notice dramatic visual results within the first few days following their procedure.

### **What are the risks?**

There are risks with the LASIK procedure. However, the chance of having a vision reducing complication has been documented in a number of clinical studies to be minimal. Remember, millions of people have had excellent results from LASIK.

Some potential complications include conditions such as dryness, complications in making the surgical flap,

night glare, under- or over-correction, and loss of best-corrected vision. At TLC Laser Eye Centers, these and other risks of the surgery are discussed fully with the patient prior to the procedure. Proper pre-operative screening ensures that we proceed with the procedure only when it is medically advisable. As well, diligent post-operative care helps to identify and address any potential healing complications.

Perhaps the best way to help prevent LASIK complications is to choose a surgeon who is experienced and respected in the community. This is one of the advantages of choosing TLC. TLC is careful to join only with respected and knowledgeable eye care professionals who value patient care above all things.