

# **LASIK/ Laser Vision Correction 10 essential questions you need to ask your LASIK doctor**

**Learn more on how to choose the right place?**

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## ***Would you buy a discount life jacket?***

If you are considering LASIK, there are certain things that you should consider for successful treatments. Be wary of hard-sell and deep discounts. We are talking about your eyes, not eggs or boxes of soap. LASIK is a surgical procedure not some form of commodity that warrants celebrity branding!! These are your only pair of eyes which are not replaceable like cars!

**The success of laser vision correction or LASIK depends on a combination of factors:**

1. The expertise of the doctor
2. An advanced tried and tested laser technology
3. International standard set up of hygiene and care with stringent eligibility criteria.

## ***10 Questions you need to ask your doctor***

### **Q1. What technology is being used?**

Wavefront LASIK or custom LASIK is the most advanced LASIK method today. It can be performed using various lasers. The speed of the laser and its applications are very important in delivering results. Today, the world's fastest laser is the **500 Hz Concerto Laser** whereas most other lasers are close to 50-100 Hz and some to 200 Hz.

### **Q.2. How long has the surgeon been working with this technology?**

You must find a place with sufficient experience. You don't want to be someone's first case, or even their fiftieth!

The levels of risk and benefit vary not only from the laser technology but also from surgeon to surgeon depending on their level of experience with that particular laser. With new lasers entering the market rapidly, be aware that it generally takes approximately 200 to 500 LASIK procedures before a *nomogram* is reasonably well developed. The nomogram defines the formula that the surgeon enters into the excimer laser's computer for performing your procedure. It is based on a series of measurements performed at the time of the preoperative exam, as well as on the surgeon's technique and the laser used. A well developed nomogram allows the surgeon to more accurately program the laser for each patient, decreasing the probability that an enhancement procedure will be necessary.

### **Q 3. What is the surgeon's experience?**

Numerous studies have shown that surgeons experience a learning curve with the LASIK procedure. It has been shown that surgeons who have performed over 300 procedures have a lower complication rate than those who have performed fewer. Moreover, Watch out for misleading advertising claims.

The most important decision you will make when considering laser eye surgery will certainly be the choice of doctor who will perform your operation. This is more important than whether or not to have the surgery done. An ethical and conscientious surgeon will advise you as to whether or not laser correction is right for you. This must be based upon your own particular eyes, health and situation. It is a unique decision and you need the best advice as to what is right for you.

Like a formula 1 racing car, anyone can get it round the track but it needs special skills to make the machine perform at its best.

### **Q 4. Will you provide me the names and contact information of at least ten previous patients who have had the exact same surgery with similar refractive error?**

Doctors have not been obliged to track the results of their work. But a good conscientious surgeon voluntarily tracks the outcomes of each procedure. The surgeon should be able to offer you support from some of his/ her patients.

**Q 5. What percent of his/her patients read 20/20 or better with Snellen Uncorrected Visual Acuity (UCVA)?**

Your answer should be over 90 %. Be wary of anyone saying 100%!

**Q 6. Determine who will be doing your preoperative and postoperative care: the LASIK surgeon or his or her assistants?**

Many a times the pre operative work us is done by an assistant and not the main surgeon himself. This is a cause for concern at times because the data which is collected at the time of examination is what is fed into the laser and has to be accurate. Hence, it is best left in the hands of the expert.

The most advanced form of LASIK is wavefront-guided LASIK. It takes great experience to accurately procure, read, form treatment profiles and execute to perfection. Our surgeon is an international instructor for wavefront-guided treatments

Your results depend on what is fed into the laser computer.

Find an experienced LASIK surgeon who will make the commitment to you to take full responsibility for your LASIK result, who will meet you prior to surgery, and who will be actively involved in every aspect of your LASIK procedure.

Be sure you know who is actually doing the procedure. Ask who will be doing your follow-up. Ask about their qualifications. Find out how many procedures he or she has done. While higher volume does not necessarily imply a better surgeon, you will want someone who has done at least several hundred surgeries.

Determine for yourself whether the LASIK surgeon has a kind, compassionate staff to help support you emotionally throughout the LASIK process.

**Q 7. Have you had any complications?**

Beware of any surgeon who says never!!

Surgical success means more than knowing how to avoid complications; it means knowing how to handle difficult situations before they arise. Identifying problems early and dealing with them in a timely manner is the hallmark of excellent surgeons. All surgeons have complications, but that does not mean that anything was done wrong. What is important is that the surgeon has a low complication rate and that the ultimate visual outcomes be good.

**Q 8. Is the centre a multi doctor centre? Or a single user centre?**

In our experience, there have been many instances when there have been more than one LASIK surgeon in a LASIK centre. Here the maintenance and standardization practices are of utmost importance. More the users [doctors sharing the laser set up], more the need for very vigilant and stringent criteria for machinery maintenance.

**Q 9. Is the centre pushing a sale? Beware of the Hard Sell**

If you feel like you are getting a hard sell, you probably are. Be wary of promises or guarantees seen in advertisements, such as "20/20 vision or your money back" or "lifetime guarantee." Of necessity, such statements contain fine print and initiate the doctor-patient relationship in a rather deceptive manner. You are not buying a car. This is real surgery. Your surgeon should be well aware of the limits of LASIK and readily acknowledge the probability of complications in high-risk patients. Remember, personal chemistry is extremely important. Choose a surgeon with whom you feel comfortable; someone who is easy to talk to, friendly, and professional; someone who listens closely to what you want and cares about what you need. Make sure he or she is willing to take the time necessary for your understanding of the procedure. A good doctor-patient relationship is important in helping devise a treatment plan that best suits your needs.

**Q 10. Is the LASIK centre an accredited centre?**

All centres need to follow strict vigilant guidelines and protocols of hygiene and procedures. Most good reputed centres follow them and also prove it with an accreditation. This ensures that the centre is following healthy practices of medical services and facility management.

**CONCLUSION**

**LASIK has improved the eyesight of over a million people around the world.** Your LASIK surgeon need not be your best friend, but you should have every confidence that he or she possesses the skill and experience necessary to apply the technique of LASIK in a way that best serves your interests

**Don't base your decision simply on cost** and don't settle for the first eye center, doctor, or procedure you investigate. Remember that the decisions you make about your eyes and refractive surgery will affect you for the rest of your life.

*If in doubt keep searching!*

**Many leading LASIK surgeons have taken the extra effort to establish web sites that detail their practice, qualifications, and success rates. The internet is a great tool for more information.**