

■ A Visionary Tool

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Mississippi ophthalmologists perform IntraLase "blade-free" Lasik procedures

Thressa Baker, a 42-year-old mother of three from Gulfport, had suffered from "horrible" lifelong vision, extreme dry eye problems and other complications.

A few years ago, Baker had developed the ophthalmic condition, "dry eyes," which radically worsened when she became pregnant with her last child. As a result, she no longer enjoyed wearing contact lenses and, for various reasons, was a poor candidate for Lasik laser vision correction. She also was developing early cataracts. Her sibling had double detached retinas, which put Baker at risk for detachments during surgeries, especially with her high myopia. However, Baker's job involves

reading daily so correcting her eye problems was high priority.

Baker was referred to Rainna Bahadur, MD, a Biloxi ophthalmologist at Eye Associates of the South.

Bahadur carefully planned a specialized cataract surgery to implant custom-ordered, powered cataract replacement lenses in both eyes to fully correct Baker's nearsightedness. To prevent detached retinas, a peripheral retinal laser treatment was performed on Baker in advance. Bahadur used a phaco machine—an ultrasonic device that breaks down and removes cloudy human lenses—at 50 percent during Baker's cataract surgery to minimize the impact on Baker's fragile eyes.

The results were stellar.

"The weekend after I had my eyes fixed, I looked at the beach and just started crying," Baker said. "I couldn't stop crying because I never in my life had seen a view like that - never. I see better than I have in my whole life."

"We aren't simply fitting people for eyeglasses and contact lenses," said Bahadur, board certified and fellowship trained in corneal/external diseases of the eye and refractive surgery. "Everyday procedures can have profound, positive life-changing effects."

Much of Baker's life had been limited by her poor vision.

"They hold themselves back from life and don't realize that it's their vision," Bahadur said. "If we can improve or even restore their vision, they're so happy and they can look forward to a better quality of life."