

Is it high time for your LASIK?

Has your vision caught up with the times? If you still are fumbling for your eyeglasses or hassled by contact lenses, then you are missing out on LASIK.

LASIK laser eye surgery is a proven procedure to correct vision. Many patients describe LASIK's benefits as life changing.

But, as with any surgery, it should not be approached like buying a TV.

Make sure your LASIK surgeon has the medical qualifications, experience and technology to help ensure a successful outcome, professional ophthalmology associations all advise. Every place that "sells" LASIK is not offering the same quality service.

If you are ready for LASIK, the first step is to have a qualified and experienced ophthalmologist determine if you have eye problems or medical conditions that indicate you may have a poor outcome.

"Not everyone is a good candidate for LASIK. I won't automatically perform LASIK on anyone. In fact, in some cases, I recommend a patient not have LASIK if they aren't a good candidate," said Rainna Bahadur, M.D., a LASIK surgeon who is board certified in ophthalmology and fellowship trained in Cornea, External Disease & Refractive Surgery, which includes LASIK. "It is an amazing procedure, but no two patients' eyes are alike."

Bahadur has successfully been performing LASIK for several years as a partner in Eye Associates of the South, which has clinics in Biloxi, Ocean Springs and Gulfport. Bahadur performs LASIK in a sterile operating room, near their Biloxi clinic, at Cedar Lake Surgery Center.

Specifically for LASIK procedures, Eye Associates of the South uses state-of-the art equipment, including the first Z-LASIK flap-maker on the Mississippi Gulf Coast and the Custom Vue LASIK system.

"We strive to offer the best eye care across South Mississippi, and our LASIK pro-



Rainna Bahadur, M.D.

gram is very much a part of that," Bahadur said. "We not only take pride in our LASIK results, we make sure our patients are well cared for and informed about the procedure."

The entire outpatient LASIK procedure takes only a few minutes and is typically painless. Vision correction is noticed immediately, with stabilization requiring a few days, she said.

Refractive errors that can cause vision problems that are correctable with LASIK include nearsightedness (myopia), farsightedness (hyperopia) and astigmatism.

In LASIK, computer data first is collected about what precise changes should be made to reshape your eyes' corneas. (The cornea is a transparent layer that forms the front of the eye). Then, at Eye Associates of the South, the Z-LASIK laser next is used to create a thin corneal flap, without the use of a blade, with computer laser precision.

Then the VISX Star Excimer laser, also computer guided for your own eyes' needs, is used to gently reshape corneal tissue that causes your vision problems.

Finally, the corneal flap is resealed into its original position and healing begins instantly, Bahadur explained.

The Femtosecond LDV Laser manufactured by Ziemer emits a high-frequency beam 100 times less intense than earlier flap-making lasers, according to

Ziemer. Its other published benefits include faster healing times and reducing rare complications from LASIK. Both the Z-LASIK and Excimer are cool lasers.

Their LASIK procedure includes CustomVue technology, which is the gold standard of the industry, noted Joel Knight, M.D., also an ophthalmologist and partner at Eye Associates of the South. The CustomVue system includes using custom 3-D mapping by VISX Wavescan equipment in the initial step to guide the procedure and, in the final treatment step, the VISX Excimer Star laser.

This all-laser LASIK corrects near and farsightedness, with or without astigmatism. Monovision LASIK is an option for presbyopia, Knight added.

Their LASIK patients also are offered up to two years to pay, same as cash, through no-interest financing by CareCredit.

Eye Associates of the South also offers free pre-LASIK screening to ensure patients' eyes are suitable for LASIK. If they are not, there is no fee, Bahadur explained.

Bahadur also has donated LASIK to Biloxi area "first responders," including a police patrolman, a firefighter and a marine resources officer.

For more information or an appointment, call 228-396-5185 or visit www.2020view.com.