

# FTC Consumer Alert

Federal Trade Commission ■ Bureau of Consumer Protection ■ Division of Consumer & Business Education

## Getting the Clear Picture on Lasik Eye Surgery

Tired of wearing glasses or contact lenses? Considering Lasik eye surgery? Lasik, a procedure for vision correction, is surgery to a very delicate part of the eye that cannot be reversed. And while hundreds of thousands of people have had Lasik, many very successfully, it's not for everyone.

The Federal Trade Commission and the American Academy of Ophthalmology advise you to get a clear picture of what you can expect before you sign up for the procedure.

Are you a good candidate for Lasik? Before you can weigh the risks and rewards, know that:

- you should be at least 18 years old and in good health.
- you should not be pregnant or nursing.
- you should not be taking certain prescription drugs, such as Accutane or oral prednisone.
- your eyes must be healthy and your prescription stable.

Even if you have the surgery, you may not get the perfect vision you're hoping for. That's because "Lasik" 20/20 does not always mean perfect vision. And if you have Lasik to correct your distance vision, you'll likely still need reading glasses around age 45. You also may need to return for additional surgery, called "retreatments," to fine-tune your vision. Lasik surgery provides lasting results for many patients, but the benefits for some may diminish over time.

If you decide to proceed, ask your surgeon the following questions:

- How long have you been doing Lasik surgery?
- How do you define success? What's your success rate? What is the chance for me to achieve 20/20?
- What laser will you be using for my surgery? Make sure your surgeon is using a laser approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).
- What's involved in my after-surgery care?
- Who will handle my after-surgery care? Who will be responsible?
- What about any risks and possible complications?
- What about side-effects? How long will they last?

For more information about Lasik, see *Basik Lasik: Tips on Lasik Eye Surgery* at [www.ftc.gov](http://www.ftc.gov).

### Where To Complain

The FTC works for the consumer to prevent fraudulent, deceptive, and unfair business practices in the marketplace and to provide information to help consumers spot, stop, and avoid them. To file a complaint or to get free information on consumer issues, visit [ftc.gov](http://ftc.gov) or call toll-free, 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357); TTY: 1-866-653-4261. The FTC enters consumer complaints into the Consumer Sentinel Network, a secure online database and investigative tool used by hundreds of civil and criminal law enforcement agencies in the U.S. and abroad.