

LASIK Vision Correction

YOUR CHOICE OF FLAP OPTIONS

LASIK is the most advanced and popular form of laser vision correction. Having performed more than 90,000 procedures, our small team of LASIK surgeons has achieved high levels of expertise with exceptional outcomes.



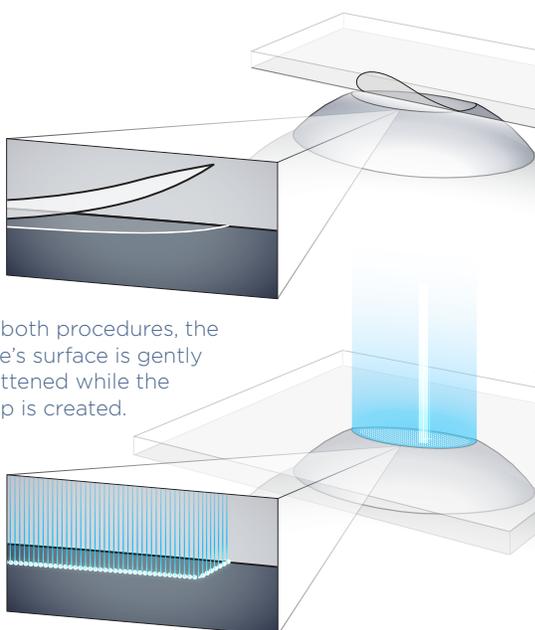
HOW LASIK WORKS

LASIK corrects focusing problems by reshaping the front of the eye. Treatment involves a three-step process:

1. A thin flap of corneal tissue is created on the surface of the eye
2. Computer guided excimer laser light removes underlying tissue
3. The flap is repositioned

TWO FLAP OPTIONS

Accurate creation of the corneal flap is an important part of the procedure. Two options are available—a bladed flap and a laser flap. Our surgeons are highly skilled and experienced with both techniques, but the choice is yours.



In both procedures, the eye's surface is gently flattened while the flap is created.

BLADED FLAP

A precision, automated instrument called a microkeratome separates layers of corneal tissue to create a hinged flap. No tissue is removed and the procedure generally takes less than 10 seconds. Bladed flaps feather out and become thinner along the edge.

LASER FLAP

A femtosecond laser (different than the excimer laser used to reshape the eye's surface) evaporates a microscopic layer of tissue within the cornea. In about 20 seconds, millions of interconnected bubbles are made to form a hinged flap. Laser flaps have more precise edge architecture.

ARE THIN LASIK FLAPS IMPORTANT?

Yes. Thin LASIK flaps measure about 100 microns and are the least disruptive to corneal strength. They also preserve more underlying tissue for the vision correction stage of treatment. Most corneas are between 500 and 600 microns thick. To maintain corneal stability and avoid serious complications such as ectasia (a thinning and irregular bulging of the cornea that disturbs vision), our careful and conservative surgeons leave as much untouched cornea under the flap as possible.

ARE LASER FLAPS THINNER THAN THOSE CREATED WITH A BLADE?

They are with most LASIK centers but not at Pacific Cataract and Laser Institute. Our LASIK flaps made with a blade or a laser are usually about 100 microns—the thickness of a piece of paper.

DO LASER FLAPS HAVE LESS CHANCE OF SERIOUS COMPLICATIONS?

Yes. Although we have an excellent bladed flap technique, laser flaps are slightly safer in two ways:

1. The rare worst complications are less likely to result in long-term problems.
2. The more precise edge architecture of laser flaps is less vulnerable than the feathered edge of bladed flaps to epithelial ingrowth, a complication that occurs when eye surface cells invade the area under the flap.

MORE INFORMATION

If you have questions about LASIK flaps or laser vision correction, or if you wish to proceed with evaluation and treatment, call our refractive surgery counselors.

*Pacific Cataract and Laser Institute
Refractive Surgery Counselors*

DO LASER FLAPS COST MORE?

Yes. There is an additional fee for laser flaps. Femtosecond lasers are very expensive instruments with substantial maintenance costs. Also, surgeons must pay a fee to the laser manufacturer for every procedure.

DO YOUR DOCTORS PREFER LASER FLAPS?

Our doctors like laser flaps because they are less risky to make and less vulnerable to complications as the eye heals. However, we are supportive of those who wish to have bladed flaps for cost savings and convenience.

ARE THERE DIFFERENT NAMES FOR THE LASER FLAP TECHNIQUE?

Yes. Surgeons often use terms like *bladeless*, *blade-free* and *all-laser LASIK* to promote this option. Femtosecond laser manufacturers have also coined names such as *IntraLase*, *iLASIK* and *zLASIK* for the flap procedures done with their instruments.

ARE ALL FEMTOSECOND LASERS USED FOR LASIK FLAPS THE SAME?

No. Just as the numbers of pixels in digital cameras have greatly increased, so has the speed (frequency) of some of the newest femtosecond lasers. The laser we use to create LASIK flaps has an operating frequency more than 300 times faster than the femtosecond laser used by the majority of LASIK surgeons nationwide. The higher the frequency, the smaller the corneal cavities (bubbles) are and the closer they are together. In addition, the level of energy per pulse is

much lower in some of the newest femtosecond lasers—which results in smoother laser incisions.

ARE LASER FLAPS AVAILABLE AT ALL OF YOUR LASIK FACILITIES?

No. Although laser flaps are performed at most of our offices, they are not currently an option at all locations. If you select this option, our refractive surgery counselor can schedule your treatment at our facility that is most convenient.

YOU CAN TRUST OUR CARE

The accuracy and impeccable precision of numerous small details are key to successful LASIK. Our relentless commitment to the highest standard of care plays a significant role in our excellent treatment outcomes.

When you entrust Pacific Cataract and Laser Institute with the care of your eyes, our team of experts concentrates their skills on giving you the best possible vision. Having performed more than 500,000 micro eye surgeries, we have earned a reputation for world class care.